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In tali nunquam lassat venatio sylva.
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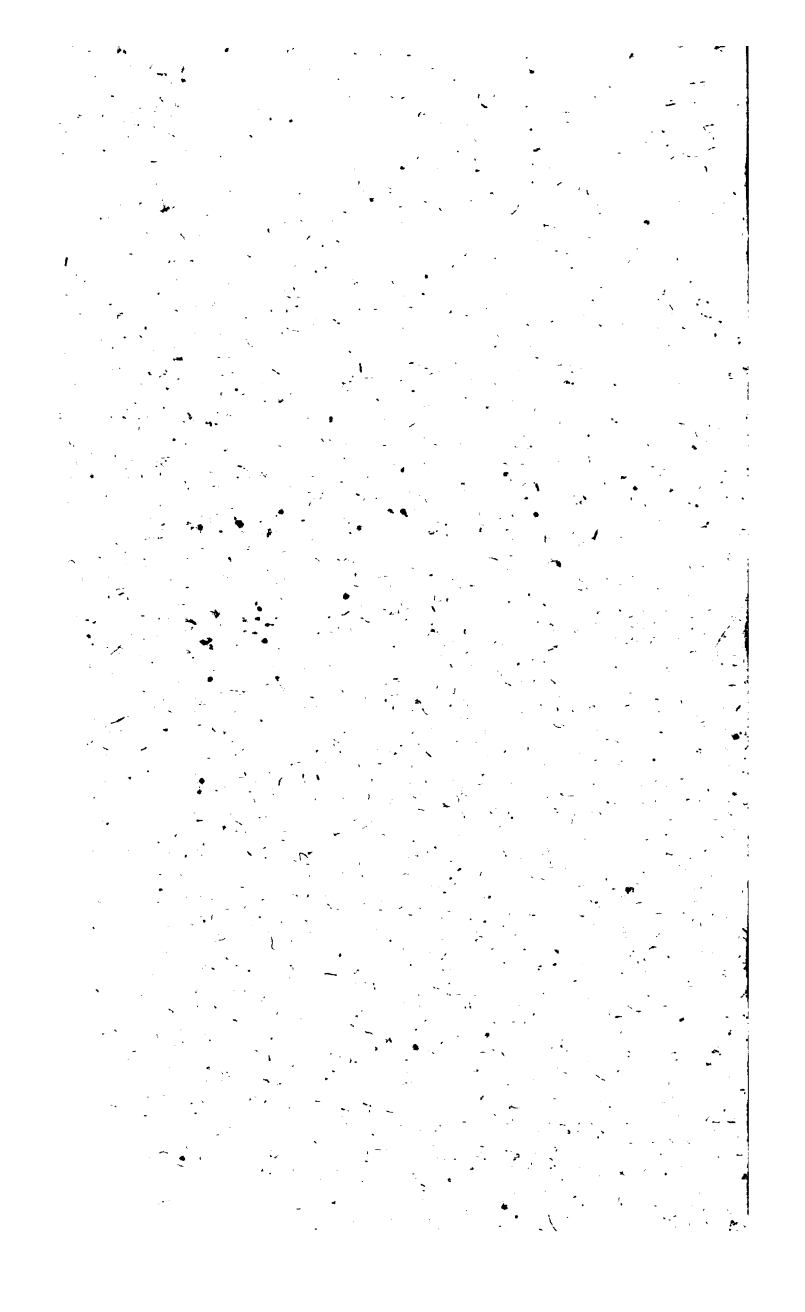
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A
T R E A T I S E
ON
JUSTIFICATION:

SHEWING

The Matter, Manner, Time, and Effects of it.

By the REVEREND

Mr. THOMAS DUTTON,

Late Minister in LONDON, and Author of the Discourse
on the NEW-BIRTH, and RELIGIOUS LETTERS.

It is God that justifieth. Rom. viii. 33.

THE THIRD EDITION.

GLASGOW:

Printed by WILLIAM SMITH,
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Sold at his Shop, above the Cross.

MDCCLXXVIII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE scripture doctrine of the free justification of guilty sinners, thro' the meritorious obedience and imputed righteousness of the adorable Redeemer, received by faith, as it is of the utmost importance in itself, so it has ever been one of the received articles of all the reformed churches, and is still held, by all true protestants, as one of the most essential doctrines of Christianity. It has always been the delightful theme of every orthodox and evangelical minister; and constantly yields the most solid comfort to every sincere Christian.

Though there have been many useful and elaborate Treatises written upon the point, by divines of distinguished abilities, there is yet room for more, as the subject is inexhaustible. —The small tract now offered to the public, needs no recommendation: the worthy author of it was well known; and the performance, when read, will sufficiently recommend itself, and has already done so, to such as have perused it.

The author's plan in the discourse is shortly
 s;—To consider the doctrine of the justifi-
 cation of a sinner, in the sight of God, in the
 NATURE of it, *viz.* the complete *obedience* of
 Jesus Christ, exclusive of all works of the
 creature;—in the MANNER of it, as, with re-
 spect to God, it is by *imputation*, and with
 respect to ourselves, by *faith*;—in the TIME
 of it, as it respects the whole *body* of the *elect*,
 and every individual person of God's *chosen*;—
 and in the EFFECTS of it, with respect to the
 INDIVIDUAL, as it regards its *peace*, its *state*, and its
salvation.

In this edition, the Treatise is divided into
 distinct Sections, agreeable to the above plan;
 and to each Section there is prefixed a scripture
 text, suitable to the respective branches of the
 discourse. With a preface and introduction,
 giving some account of the author, and the
 work.

The editor makes no apology for the present
 publication: he has been warmly importuned
 to it; and the scarceness of the book, with the
 very terms on which it is now offered, (not be-
 yond the one half of the former price); the in-
 teresting nature of the subject; and the clear
 and distinct manner in which it is handled, will,
 he hopes, sufficiently excuse the attempt.

T H E P R E F A C E.

*A*MONG the many peculiar and interesting doctrines in the Christian system, necessary to be properly understood, there is none of greater importance than the doctrine of the justification of guilty sinners. As right notions of this important point, is of the utmost consequences to fallen men; so the scriptures of truth exhibit the most full and distinct view thereof: there we are told that guilty men are only justified in the sight of God, by having the finished righteousness of the blessed Jesus, consisting in his active and passive obedience, freely imputed, exclusive of all good works of the creature, and received by faith.

This is not only the scripture doctrine of justification; but also the doctrine of all our reformed churches; and was of such great account with our protestant reformers, that Luther said of it, 'That the church either stood or fell, as this doctrine was maintained, or rejected.'

The Rev. Mr. DUTTON, author of the following Treatise, on the important doctrine of Justification, was also the author of some other Tracts. We have seen his discourse concerning the NEW BIRTH, and his LETTERS on religious subjects. In these he has given uncontested proofs of his pious disposition, and thorough acquaintance with the inspired

oracles of divine truth: and it is evident, in the whole of his performances, he has studied more the edification of such of his readers, as love truth in its native dress, when stript of every human embellishment, than to gratify their vain curiosity with a flow of words which the wisdom of man teacheth.

**In the following Treatise on Justification, he has endeavoured to exhibit to his readers, a scriptural view of his subject, in the words of the Holy Ghost, comparing spiritual things with spiritual: and, undervaluing the censure of captious and ill-natured critics, who itch more after elegant diction and well turned periods, than substantial truth, he has conveyed his sentiments in language easy, intelligible, and scriptural.—And the discourse is not only doctrinal, but practical; for, while the author discovers himself to have a clear knowledge of his subject, he also displays an experimental acquaintance with the power of religion, in pointing out the comfort of saving faith, in the atonement of Christ, and its salutary influence on the renewed heart.*

The plan of his discourse is plain and comprehensive. He endeavours to give his readers a distinct view of the complete atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the alone justifying righteousness of guilty sinners. This he views in both its branches, consisting in his active and passive obedience. His active obedience, which lies in his full and

perfect conformity to the whole divine law, without the least failure, either of parts or degrees of obedience, every way answerable to the dignity of his divine person as God-man.—In his passive obedience, which consists in his giving complete satisfaction for sin, by suffering, in the human nature, all that wrath, threatened by the law, as due to elect sinners, as their surety, and enduring the infinite execution of the curse upon him in his death, to the full compensation of all the injuries done to an infinite God, by all the sins of an elect world†.—This our author proves by the most conclusive arguments, to be the alone righteousness, by which elect sinners are justified in the sight of God, exclusive of all foreseen good works, or any qualifications in the creature, previous to their justification, all such being quite insufficient to recommend a sinner to the favour of God, and have no part in that righteousness whereby the sinner is justified.*

As nothing is of greater importance, or can give more satisfaction to the real saint, than to be instructed with regard to the nature of the justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and how this righteousness becomes his; so, the author of the following Treatise beautifully illustrates this interesting point, from the infallible oracles of divine truth, and shews it to be by imputation on God's part‡; For he hath made him to be

* Matth. v. 17, 18. † Gal. iii. 13. Eph. v. 2.

‡ Rom. iv. 6. 2 Cor. v. 21.

sin, [viz. by imputation] for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, [viz. by justification and imputation:]—and by believing on our part*. Here our author illustrates the nature of saving faith, shews how it acts, and what are its proper objects.

With regard to the time of justification, our author views this both as imminent and transient; imminent, as an act of God's will, and consequently from eternity; God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself: transient, as an act which passes upon the whole body of the elect at once, in Christ, their representative, and on every individual of God's elect, when the soul is first enabled to believe in Christ†.

As nothing can be more desirable, or yield more real comfort to the true Christian, than to be acquainted with the satisfactory evidences of his being justified, the author has accordingly shewn, in this Treatise, the effects of justification, as it respects the soul's peace, its state, and obedience.—He has, on this part of his discourse, endeavoured, in the most scriptural manner, to specify the difference between the peace of a justified soul, and that false peace of an unjustified sinner.

The author, before he concludes his excellent discourse, propounds a particular objection against

* Rom. x. 10. and iv. 16. iii. 22.

† Rom. i. 17. iii. 22, 26. iv. 5. x. 10. and Acts xiii. 39.

the scheme of doctrine laid down and illustrated, which he answers with the greatest evidence and clearness, and shews the absurdity and falshood of it in the clearest point of view, though stated with a specious appearance of truth.—The discourse is concluded with a variety of very important and useful instructions, natively deduced from the doctrine, admirably well calculated to gladden the hearts of sincere Christians, as well as for the instruction of the ignorant.

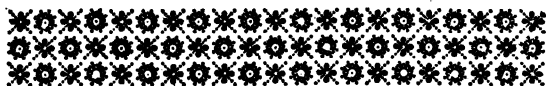
Upon the whole, it will be allowed, that the subject-matter of this excellent discourse, is at once comprehensive, glorious, and delightful, and of all others, of the utmost importance; and that right notions of this important article, the justification of a sinner by the blood and righteousness of Christ, tend, through divine grace, to yield the most solid comfort and real joy to every true Christian. It must also be granted, that no knowledge is of equal importance with that of knowing Christ, and the way of salvation through his imputed righteousness. Ignorance of this cardinal doctrine of our holy religion, is joined in scripture with not-submission to it; and all such, in the issue, must be miserable souls indeed, who are found ignorant of Christ's righte-

fin, usefulness, and go about to establish a righteousness, of their own, not submitting of ourselves unto the righteousness of the law, Rom. x. 3.

our author To promote these important ends, the instruction of the ignorant, as well as the establishment and consolation of the people of God, was, no doubt, the intention of the pious author in composing and publishing this discourse. The manner in which the subject is handled, is concise, clear, and scriptural; and it is hoped will be found well calculated, through the divine blessing, to answer the great ends just now mentioned, which, there is no reason to doubt, have already, in some good measure, been attained by its publication.

That they may be farther promoted by this new addition, and that the knowledge of Christ, and the way of salvation through him, may be diffused through the world, is the sincere desire of those concerned in the publication of it.

GLASGOW, Oct. }
24th, 1777. }



A

Treatise on Justification.



ISAIAH xlv. 26.

In the Lord shall the seed of Israel be justified.

INTRODUCTION.

THE scriptures of truth are the great treasury of divine knowledge; for therein, among many other precious truths, the righteousness of Christ is not only revealed, but brought near to guilty sinners. The blessed gospel brings the most joyful tidings to the children of men: and as there is no other robe in which fallen men can stand accepted, before God, but the Redeemer's justifying righteousness, this is therein said to be *unto, and upon all that believe*. This garment of Christ's everlasting righteousness, the gospel presents as the alone ground of that

v. 12 *Of the* MATTER Sect. I.

for eternal salvation we enjoy by him; and
this is every way sufficient for us both to live
on, and to die in.



IN the *justification* of a sinner, in the sight
of God, I shall consider four things
principally. As, 1. The *Matter* of it.
2. The *Manner* of it. 3. The *Time* of it.
And, 4. The *Effect* of it, with respect to
the soul. And then, 5. In the last place
shall add something by way of *Use*. I
shall consider each of these in the order
laid down.



S E C T. I.

Of the MATTER of *Justification*.

J E R. xxiii. 6.

This is the name whereby he shall be called,
THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THE *matter* of *justification*, or the
matter of that *righteousness*, where-
by a sinner is made *Righteous* in the sight

of God, is first to be considered: and this, according to *the scriptures of truth*, is the complete *obedience of Jesus Christ*, exclusive of all the creature's *works*, whether before, or after its regeneration by the Spirit of God. The complete obedience of Jesus Christ, to the divine law, hath two branches, which are commonly styled, his *active* and *passive obedience*; which consist, in his fulfilling all the law's requirements, and enduring all its penalties. The righteousness which God's law requires, hath two parts, *viz.* a negative part, and a positive part. The negative part of righteousness, consists, in abstaining from, or the *not* doing of those things which the law *forbids*. And the positive part of righteousness, consists, in the *doing* of those things which the law *requires*. And *Sin is the transgression of the law*, in both these respects; on which account, the law's penalty, becomes righteously due to every transgressor. And these two parts of the law's righteousness, though they may be distinguished, yet cannot be divided. For, whoever wants that conformity to the law, which it requires, is likewise a transgressor of it, in doing what it for-

bids; and whoever doth what the law forbids, wants that conformity to its precepts, which the law requires, so that they cannot be *divided*; but yet they may be *distinguished*. And the transgressor of the law, is an unrighteous person, in the eye of the law, in both these respects. And answerably, it was necessary that the righteousness of Christ should consist of two parts. As,

1. His *active* obedience, to answer to the *positive* part of the law's righteousness. And this consists, in that perfect, universal, and perpetual obedience, which he yielded to the requirements of God's holy law, both internally and externally, in heart, in lip, and in life, from his birth to his death. Whereby he gave the law its due, even all that obedience, which its extensive precepts demanded; and so fulfilled it, as to the positive part of its righteousness. For being *made of a woman, he was made under the law*, Gal. iv. 4. And *what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law*, Rom. iii. 19. Christ was under the law, and what things soever it saith, in its requirements, it said to him; and he yielded a

of JUSTIFICATION. 15

perfect obedience thereto, on purpose to fulfil it. Thus he says of himself, Mat. v. 17. *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.* And chap. iii. ver. 15. *Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.* And he that sent me is with me, (says our Lord;) *the Father hath not left me alone: for I do always those things that please him,* John viii. 29. He did all the things which God's law required; he did them perfectly; he did them constantly, or always did them, in such a manner, that God the Father was well pleased with his obedience. By this, he satisfied the law's requirements, and gave it all that it demanded: Yea, let me say, he gave it more than it could demand. All that the law demanded, as it was given out to Adam, and in him, to all his posterity, was no more than the perfect obedience of the creature that was under it. And this Christ yielded in his human nature; not for all Adam's race, but for all his own, whom he represented. And the obedience Christ yielded in his human nature, that nature being personally united to his divine, was the obedience of his person;

and so had an infinite worth, and glory in it; whereby he gave the law *more* than it could demand. As was foretold of him, Isa. xlii. 21. *The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.* Oh how was the divine law magnified, by so great a person's being made under it! How honourable was it made by his great obedience! Let me say, the law could not have been so magnified, nor have had so much honour given it, by the most perfect obedience of *all* the creatures, to eternity, as it had by the obedience of this *one* Lord Jesus! If sin had never entered, the creatures would have obeyed the law, *perfectly*, and *perpetually*. But their obedience could have risen no higher than their beings, which were but *finite*; and so the law could have had but a finite honour. But the person of Christ being infinite, his obedience was such; and so the law had an infinite honour given it. O the transcendent glory of Christ's obedience! And how *well pleased* was the Lord for this *his righteousness sake*! How well pleased was he *with this righteousness*! And for this righteousness *sake*, how well

pleased was he, with all *those* for whom it was wrought out. For, as our Lord, yielded a complete obedience to all the precepts of the moral law, whereby he wrought out a perfect righteousness, so he did it, not for *himself*, but for *us*. As he was born for us, so he was made under the law for us, and obeyed it for us; and thereby he wrought out a righteousness for us. He needed it not for himself, no; it was to cover his naked children. All mankind had a perfect robe of moral righteousness, in their representative-head, Adam, while he stood in the state of innocence. But upon his first sin, they lost it, and became naked; and as such, were exposed to the wrath of a sin-revenging God. And this was the case of the elect of God, as well as others, as they stood related to the first Adam, and considered in the fall. But these being of old *ordained to eternal life*, it was necessary, that they should be completely righteous, that so the law, and justice of God, might not oppose their enjoyment of eternal salvation. And in order to make them so, Christ, the second Adam, obeys the law perfectly for them, in such a manner, as

they, by reason of sin, were utterly incapable of. Whereby he wrought out for them a righteousness, that was every way as large, and spotless, as that which they had in their first head, Adam, before his fall: yea, in such a manner, as to make them a righteousness, that is every way answerable to his own superior glory, as the second Adam, *the Lord from heaven*; and to their transcendent relation unto him, their heavenly head; as such. The first Adam's righteousness, was a bright garment, that was every way fitted, to make creatures stand before God, with acceptance, in the enjoyment of Eden's bliss, or the natural happiness of an earthly paradisaical state; but the second Adam's righteousness, is an outshining, glorious robe, that is every way fitted, to make all those who are clothed with it, to stand before the face of God, or in his immediate presence, with the highest acceptance, in the enjoyment of the *heavenly* paradise, or *third heaven's* glory. The finite glory of the first Adam's righteousness, was changeable in itself, and might be lost; and accordingly it was: but the infinite glory of the righteousness of the second

Adam, is absolutely unchangeable in itself, can never fade, or be lost, but endureth for ever. It is a *durable*, an *everlasting righteousness*, that will abide the same, in all the immense glories of it, through all the successive ages of time, and to the endless ages of eternity. *Riches and honour are with me*, says our Lord; *yea, durable riches and righteousness*, Prov. viii. 18. And, Isa. li. 6. *Lift up your eyes to the heavens*, says he; *and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old as a garment, and they that dwell therein, shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever*, (here is salvation in this righteousness, and there is none in any other) *and my righteousness shall not be abolished*. How well, then, are they dressed, who are cloathed with this glorious, unchangeable, everlasting robe! And how miserably apparelled are those wretched souls, who seek to adorn themselves with the *filthy rags* of their own *righteousness*; which can never make any soul righteous in the sight of God! For, *as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made right-*

teous, Rom. v. 19. As by the *disobedience* of one man, Adam, *many*, [i. e. all his *natural posterity*,] were made *sinners*; so, by the *obedience* of one, Lord Jesus Christ, shall *many* [i. e. all his *spiritual seed*,] be made *righteous*. But thus much shall suffice, as to the first branch of Christ's obedience, or his *active* obedience to the law's requirements; whereby he makes all his *positively* *righteous*, to the utmost perfection, and highest glory, in the eye of the holy law, and strict justice of God.

2. The *passive* obedience of Jesus Christ, is another part of his righteousness, which was absolutely necessary to make us completely righteous in the sight of God, with respect to the *negative* part of the law's righteousness; which, as was said, consists, in the not doing of those things which the law forbids. And as we were transgressors of the law, we had done those things which were forbidden by the law; and on this account, justly deserved its penalty. And therefore it was necessary, in order to set us free from guilt, condemnation, and wrath, that he should be made a *sin-offering*, and a *curse* for us, and die in our stead; which, in infinite

of JUSTIFICATION. 21

grace, he submitted to. And in these sufferings of his, his passive obedience consisted: he *became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*, Phil. ii. 8. He *was made sin for us*, 2 Cor. v. 21.; and *a curse for us*, Gal. iii. 13.; and *died in our stead*, 1 Pet. iii. 18. And being an infinite person, he was able by *himself*, the sacrifice of himself, to *purge away our sins*, to overcome the curse, to endure all that wrath which was due to us, till he had drank off that bitter cup, even to the last drop of it; and, then, the law and justice of God, being fully satisfied, he was judicially *raised from the dead*: God, the great creditor, set him free, when he sent an *angel from heaven*, as the messenger of justice, to *roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre*: for, as he had *made peace by his blood*, so God, as the *God of peace*, brought him again from the dead, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*; and thereby did openly acquit him, as the great representative of his people, in their name and room. For, as *he was delivered for our offences, so he was raised again for our justification*, Rom. iv. 25. And thus by his passive obedience, he

made us completely righteous in the sight of God, and in the eye of his holy law, with respect to the *negative* part of its righteousness, or the not doing of those things which it forbids; and as spotless, as if sin had never entered. *He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,* Rev. i. 5. *His blood cleanseth us from all sin,* 1 John i. 7. And hence we are said to be *justified by his blood,* Rom. v. 9.; and to *have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of the Father's grace;* Eph. i. 7.

In as much as the law and justice of God, being fully satisfied by his blood, here was a way opened, in which the exceeding riches of divine grace might be extended unto us, in the forgiveness of all our sins, with honour to all the divine perfections. In *this*, God can be *just in forgiving of sins,* 1 John i. 9. And, with reverence be it spoken, God could not forgive sin without a satisfaction to his law and justice, to the injury of his infinite holiness, his unchangeable truth, and strict justice. No; the glory of infinite grace, and boundless mercy, might not be advanced, to the eclipsing of any

of the divine perfections. If it had been possible, that all the perfections of God could have been glorified, in the salvation of sinners, without the blood of Christ's cross, he had never given up the darling of his soul, unto the stroke of his justice. But it was not *possible*; and therefore *the cup might not pass from him, without his drinking it.*—The kings of the earth, indeed, to shew their royal *grace*, do sometimes *pardon* malefactors, who are justly *condemned* by the laws of the kingdom; and herein it is true, the *clemency* of the prince is displayed, but still, the *law* suffers, and the prince's *honour* too, in relation to it. And this, because it is impossible for them to find out an *expedient*, whereby the law's *penalty* might be endured, and the *life* of the transgressor saved. But this kind of proceeding was altogether incompatible with the honour of the divine Lawgiver, and with the dignity of his righteous law. And therefore his infinite wisdom interposed, and found out a way to punish sin, and yet to *save* the sinner, to the harmonious glory of all his attributes. And this is the *great salvation*, we have by *Christ's cross*. By the cross

of Christ, we are for ever delivered from all that wrath that was due to us on account of our sin; and that in such a way, which makes us *spotless* creatures in the eye of the law; so that it hath nothing to charge us with, as washed in Christ's blood, nor can thunder out any of its curses against us. For, being *washed* in this fountain, we are *white as snow*; yea, *whiter than the snow*, Psa. li. 7. and have a *negative* righteousness, as large as all the prohibitions of God's extensive law. And this is an unspeakable privilege unto us, who are sinners, as considered in ourselves.

But then, if this *negative* righteousness, which we have by the *passive* obedience of our Lord, whereby we are freed from the law's *curse*, was all the righteousness we had, we should not be completely righteous, with respect to the law's requirements, or the *positive* part of the law's righteousness; and so could not have a right to the *blessings* thereof: and therefore, the *active* obedience of our Lord, or that perfect obedience which he yielded to the law's requirements, through the whole course of his life, is an *essential* part

of his righteousness, which was absolutely necessary to make us perfectly *righteous*, and so fully *blest*, according to the utmost latitude of the law. It is this that makes us *positively* righteous: yea, it is this that I look upon to be, in the most strict and proper sense, his *righteousness*. It is this that makes us beautiful, glorious creatures, in the eye of God, and of his holy law; as beautiful and bright, as righteous Adam was, in his paradisaical state; yea, transcendently more beautiful and glorious: for, as was said, that great obedience, which our Lord yielded to the divine law, was every way answerable to the transcendent dignity of his person, as God-man; and so must needs have a transcendency of glory in it, infinitely beyond what was possible to be found in the most perfect obedience of all the creatures. Does the law *require* us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and strength? Does it require us *always*, thus to do? We are just *such* in Christ, as it requires us to be; and have such a conformity thereto, that it can find no fault with, but every way approves of, and is satisfied with. Yea, such a

conformity, that not only pays the law its *due*, and whatever it can demand of the most perfect creatures; but that hath a *redundancy*, an overplus, or *more* than enough in it. So that in this righteousness of Christ, we are not only made perfectly righteous, in a law-sense, according to the glory of the first Adam's state; but superlatively righteous, every way answerable to the superior dignity of the new Adam's person, and the transcendent glory of his heavenly state. And we being fore-ordained to a participation hereof, it was necessary that we should have such a righteousness, that would fit us to stand for ever in the presence of Jehovah, with the highest acceptance, as the objects of his eternal complacency.

Thus it appears, that the *active* and *passive* obedience of our Lord, or both these *branches* of his righteousness, were absolutely necessary, to make us completely *righteous* in the sight of God, and of his holy law. And though these two parts of his obedience cannot be *divided*, yet they may be *distinguished*: divided they cannot be, inasmuch as that soul, who is *washed from sin in his blood*, or by

his passive obedience, is also made *righteous* by his active obedience; and whoever is made righteous by his active obedience, is likewise made *spotless* by his blood. On which account, the blessedness of a justified state is sometimes expressed by one *part* of his righteousness, and sometimes by the *other*. But though they cannot be *divided*, yet they may, and must be *distinguished*: forasmuch as by his *passive* obedience, we are more properly *discharged* from *guilt*, and *freed* from the *curse*; and by his *active* obedience, we are more properly made *righteous*, and inherit the *blessing*. And both these *parts* of our Lord's obedience, make up that *one righteousness* of his, whereby we are *justified* in the sight of God; or, which is the *matter* of a sinner's justification before God.

And as the complete *obedience* of Christ, in both its *parts*, is the *matter* of *justification*, or of the justifying righteousness of a sinner before God; so it stands *alone*, as *such*, in its own comprehensive glory, exclusive of all the creature's *works*, whether before, or after its regeneration by the Spirit of God. As, Rom. iv. 6. *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the*

28 *Of the MATTER* Sect. I.

man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. This righteousness, which is here said to be without works, is the obedience of Jesus Christ; which is the justifying righteousness of a sinner; and is so *complete* in itself, that nothing can be *added* to it, to make it more so. All the *works* of the creature, since the *fall*, are *imperfect*; and therefore, utterly *unfit* to be its justifying righteousness before God, either in whole, or in part. It is impossible, that an *imperfect* obedience can make the person that performs it *perfectly* righteous; and such is the infinite purity of God's nature, and the strictness of his justice, that he can accept of nothing for *righteousness*, that is not perfectly conformed to the *rule* of it, in his holy *law*. And therefore our own obedience cannot be the *whole* of our righteousness before God: nor can it be any *part* of it; because, that which is *wholly* imperfect, can be no *part* of perfection.

The best moral performances, that a person is capable of, while in an *unregenerate* state, fall far short of that perfect *righteousness* which the law requires; and therefore cannot be pleasing unto God,

and accepted by him as such; and so they cannot make the person acceptable in his sight, that performs them. Whence it is, that *they that are in the flesh*, (or in a state of unregeneracy) *cannot please God*, Rom. viii. 8. *For without faith it is impossible to please him*, Heb. xi. 6. The chief end of every natural man, in doing good works, is to make himself *righteous* in the sight of God; and as he brings his own righteousness to make him *accepted*, which falls so far short of what God's law requires, it is impossible that he should be *pleasing* to him, or *justified* by him. So that the works of the creature, while in an unregenerate state, can be no part of that righteousness, which makes a sinner just in the sight of God.

And as for those *works* of the creature, which are done after it is *born* from above, though they are indeed pleasing, and acceptable unto God, by Christ, in point of filial *obedience*, yet not in point of justifying *righteousness*: nor doth such a soul perform them for that end. No; the soul that is born again, that has faith in Jesus, brings nothing for its *acceptance* with God, and *justification* in his sight,

but the *righteousness* of Christ: and with *this* God the Father is so well pleased, as it answers the glorious perfections of his nature, and all the requirements of his holy law, that he cannot but accept such a soul; and pronounce it righteous, to the utmost perfection, in that glorious righteousness its faith lays hold of, and pleads before him. Thus its *person* is accepted: and where God accepts the person, he accepts the *works* of that person; as Gen. iv. 4. *And the LORD had respect unto Abel, and to his offering.* First to Abel's *person*, and then to his *offering*. And the reason why God had respect unto him, and to his offering, was because he had *faith* in the *Messiah*, who was to come; and looked for all his acceptance with God, in *Christ*, the promised seed. As, Heb. xi. 4. *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.* His *faith* brought *Christ*, typified out in that offering, for the acceptance of his *person*, in point of *righteousness*, with God; and that *sacrifice*, to be accepted by Christ, in point of filial *obedience*: and so both found the highest acceptance with God. And thus all the good works of the new-

born, being done in faith, are acceptable unto God, by Christ, but not in point of righteousness; nor do they perform them for that end... The good works of a *regenerate* person are indeed of a more excellent *kind*, than can possibly be performed by any natural man; inasmuch as they spring from a principle of true love to God in the heart, have an higher conformity to the perfect rule of his holy law, and the end of them is the glory of God in Christ. But yet, they are not without *sin*; they have much imperfection in them, and need washing in the blood of Christ, in order to their acceptance with God, in point of obedience. And being thus imperfect in themselves, they can be no part of that perfect righteousness, which is the matter of a sinner's justification in the sight of God.

Thus it appears, that all the *works* of the creature, both in a regenerate, as well as in an unregenerate state, are altogether *unfit* to be the *Matter* of its *righteousness* before God; and therefore must needs stand excluded from being any *part* thereof.

Besides, it was not becoming the infi-

nite wisdom of Jehovah, to *appoint* any other obedience, for a justifying righteousness, than that which is absolutely perfect, which his holy law can approve of, and his strict justice accept; and accordingly, he hath *appointed* no other. And on this account also, all the *works* of the creature, stand excluded from being any part of its justifying righteousness. As they are altogether unfit, in themselves, to be the matter of it; so they were never *appointed* for this end. No; God hath *appointed* the obedience of his Son, to be the only justifying righteousness of a sinner; and this, as was said, is so complete in itself, that nothing can be added to it, to make its glory more full.

It is impossible, that our *imperfect* obedience should make Christ's more *perfect*: yea, was ours absolutely *perfect*, yet could it add no *perfection* to his. Christ's righteousness, has all perfections in it, both created and uncreated! And what can be added to that which is infinite? and such is the glory of Christ's righteousness! Would it not then be a disgrace to this full, this glorious robe, to tack any part

of the creature's obedience to it, was it ever so *perfect*? How much more then is it so, to join our *imperfect* obedience, the filthy rags of a sinner's righteousness, to the spotless obedience, the infinitely glorious righteousness of the Son of God! Would it not be a disgrace to the creature-*sun*, to pretend to set a *candle* by its bright body, to make its light more *glorious*? Much more is it so to Christ, *the sun of righteousness*, to pretend to join the dim *light* of our obedience with his, as if this could add to its infinite *glory*! No, no; let Christ stand *alone*, in that exalted sphere, where his Father has placed him, and for ever shine forth in the peculiar glory of his own great name, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS! while all the innumerable multitude of the saved ones, for ever bow down, with the deepest adoration; rejoicing to be made perfectly glorious, and everlastingly blessed, by the resplendent rays of his infinite brightness cast upon them! while wondering angels assist the joy, and join the praise, to the endless ages of a blest eternity!

But stay, my soul, thou art yet in the body; and must wait a while, for the

34 *Of the* MATTER Sect. I.

glory of that bright day, when, in heavenly raptures, and endless praises, thou wilt sing the *Lamb's new song*; proclaiming him *worthy* to have all the *glory* of thy *salvation*, who has *loved thee*, and *washed thee from thy sins in his own blood*; and made thee splendidly glorious, by the refulgent rays of his own infinite righteousness! which he hath cast upon thee, and with which he furrounds thee! And mean while, though thou art overspread with sin, death, and darkness in thy self; yet lift up thy head, rejoice in thy Saviour, and praise THE LORD THY RIGHTEOUSNESS, to the utmost of thy present ability, and thy little strength; and humbly make thy *boast* in him all the *day* long; even all this short space of thy mortal life, until the days of eternity come on; and *then*, thou shalt *see him as he is*, and praise him as thou wouldest, in those heights of glory and bliss, which are yet unknown! in that mount of vision, from whence thou shalt never come down!—But, to return from this digression.

The obedience of Christ, as the justifying righteousness of a sinner, being so *perfect* in itself, that nothing can be *added*

to it, by any of the creature's *obedience*, to make its *glory* more full; yea, so perfect, that the highest obedience of a creature, were it possible that it could be joined with it, would be but a *disgrace* to its infinite glory: what faint then is there, that would desire to be found in any other righteousness, for his justifying dress before God? I am sure, to a man of them, they are all of Job's mind, who, *though he were perfect, yet would not know his soul; but despise his life*, Job ix. 21. He saw such a transcendent glory in his Redeemer's righteousness, that though his own were perfect, he would not know his soul; that is, he would not approve of his own obedience, as his justifying dress before God; but would despise his life, or those, his supposed, perfect works, to which the law's promise of life is annexed; and chuse to be found in Christ's righteousness, for all his acceptance with God; that so he might enjoy that superior life, glory, and blessedness, which are only to be had in and through Christ. And of this mind was the apostle Paul, Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9. He counted all his birth-privileges, and his legal performances,

both before, and after his regeneration, to be *but loss and dung*, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ; that so he might be found in him, and his righteousness, not having on his own. And all the saints are of this mind; they are such *that rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*; As, verse 3.

And as the complete obedience of Jesus Christ, is the matter of a sinner's justification before God, exclusive of all its own works; so, all along, throughout the whole *gospel*, it stands *opposed* to the works of the law, or our own obedience to the law; this alone, having the broad seal of heaven, the stamp of divine authority upon it for this end. And had it not been thus, there could have been no salvation for any one soul. And therefore the apostle Paul, when he professeth himself not to be *ashamed of the gospel of Christ*; because *it is the power of God unto salvation*, Rom. i. 16. gives the righteousness of Christ, as the reason of all that salvation, which this powerful gospel brings to poor sinners, verse 17. *For therein* [i. e. in the gospel] *is the*

of JUSTIFICATION. 37.

righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.

This righteousness, which is here spoken of, is the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and it is styled, *the righteousness of God*; 1. Because, it was of God the Father's contriving, for the justification and salvation of his people. 2. Of his appointing for that end. 3. Of his revealing. And, 4. Of his accepting.—Again, it is styled, *the righteousness of God*; because the Lord Jesus Christ, the person who wrought it out, is God equal with the Father, and has all the essential perfections of the *Godhead* in him.

And thus, in all respects, it denotes, the glory and excellency of this righteousness, and the sufficiency of it, for the justification of a sinner. Thus, chap. iii. 20, 21. *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for, by the law is the knowledge of sin.* In this verse, all the creature's obedience, stands for ever excluded, as its justifying righteousness before God; and therefore, if there had not been a better righteousness provided, there could have been no salvation for one sinner. But, in the

next verse, the salvation of God revealed in the glorious gospel, is brought in with an adverbative, *a but*. *BUT now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested; being witnessed by the law and the prophets.*

This righteousness is said to be *manifested*, and *now* to be manifested; that is, by the blessed *gospel*, and the dispensation thereof, which *brought life and immortality to light*, thereby, for poor sinners. And this righteousness of God, is said to be *without the law*; that is, without our *obedience* to the law. But though, as if the apostle should say, this righteousness of God, by which a sinner is justified and saved, is altogether *without* the law, the *works* of the law, or the creatures *obedience* to it; yet is not the *law*, hereby, set aside, or made void, but completely *fulfilled*. It is such a *righteousness*, that though it is not *of* the law, nor of the law's bringing to *light*; yet now it is manifested by the *gospel*, the *law approves* of it, as that which answers all its demands, and satisfies it to the full. The law bears *witness* of it as current coin, that pays it all its, due, even to a mighty overplus.

of JUSTIFICATION. 39

And therefore, when free-grace justifies a sinner, in this righteousness, that person is pronounced righteous, as a doer of the law; for none but *the doers of the law* can be justified, Rom. ii. 13. And as none can keep the *law* in their own persons, and so cannot be justified by their own *obedience*; so those who are justified in *Christ's, the righteousness of the law*, is said to be fulfilled in them, Rom. viii. 4.

And as this righteousness of God, manifested by the gospel, is *witnessed to by the law*, as being every way such that it requires; so likewise, it is no new, strange thing, that was never heard of in the world, before the gospel, as a *dispensation*, entered; for it is *witnessed by the prophets*. Thus it was foretold, what the language of all that are Christ's should be, as they came up in the successive ages of time; who, one by one, even every one for themselves, should say, *In the LORD have I righteousness*, Isa. xlv. 24. And thus the Lord himself speaks concerning his people, chap. liv. 17. *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, shalt thou condemn. This is the heritage of*

40 *Of the MATTER, &c.* Sect. I.

the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD. Thus, Isa. xlv. 12, 13. Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness. I bring near my righteousness; and my salvation shall not tarry. And, thus it was predicted, concerning the Messiah, 'as his peculiar work, to finish transgression, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24. And, to mention no more, This is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, Jer. xxiii. 6.—Thus the righteousness of God (the complete obedience of Jesus Christ) without the law (or exclusive of all the creature's works) being manifested, by the gospel, is witnessed by the law and the prophets, as the only justifying righteousness of a sinner before God.—And so much for the first thing proposed, viz. the matter of justification.



S E C T. II.

Of the MANNER of Justification.

Rom. iv. 6. i. 17. x. 10.

*God imputeth righteousness without works.—
The righteousness of God is revealed from
faith to faith.—With the heart man be-
lieveth unto righteousness.*

THE manner of justification is like-
wise to be considered. And this
is two-fold; and has respect, 1. Unto
God. And, 2. Unto ourselves.

I. With respect unto God, the manner
of the justification of a sinner is by *impu-
tation*. And this stands, in God's *reckon-
ing*, or *accounting*, and *pronouncing* of a
sinner righteous, in the *righteousness* of
his Son. And thus it stands opposed to
a person's being righteous by *inhesion*, and
by his own *performances*, as Adam was
before his fall. The law of God requires
perfect righteousness, both in heart and
life, in the creature that would be justi-

fied by it; and it can justify such an one, and no other. But since the fall, neither *Adam*, nor any of his *posterity*, were legally righteous in themselves; and so could not be justified by their own righteousness. For, in this sense, *there is none righteous*, [*i. e.* legally righteous in themselves, and by their own performances] *no not one*, Rom. iii. 10. And therefore by the deeds of the law, *no flesh can be justified in the sight of God*, ver. 20. *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*, ver. 23.; and so are shut up under the curse of his righteous law, and bound over to his wrath, in the sentence thereof; and so there is no life for a sinner by the law: it cannot justify, but must condemn an unrighteous person. But the gospel reveals a righteousness of God's providing*; wherein a sinner may be perfectly righteous in the eye of his holy law and strict justice; and accordingly justified and saved unto life eternal. And this, as was said, is the righteousness of Christ, which God the Father *reckons*, or *imputes* to a poor sinner as its *own*. He puts, or placeth, Christ's righteousness to the *sinner's* account; as he put, or placed, his sin unto

* Rom. i. 16, 17.

Christ's score: As 2 Cor. v. 21. *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Christ knew no sin, either by inhesion, or communion; and yet God the Father put, or placed, the sins of his people to his account, *imputed* them unto him, and so made him sin for us; that so we, who know no righteousness, might be made the righteousness of God in him, by having his righteousness put, or placed, to us as ours, and we pronounced righteous therein; even perfectly so, merely by *imputation*. And as it was a righteous thing with God, to impute the sins of his people unto Christ, because of his voluntary undertaking for them, as their *Surety*, in the everlasting covenant, to take their debts upon himself, and pay them to the full; so likewise, it is a just, and equitable thing with God, to *impute* the righteousness of his Son to his people; because it was performed by him for them, as their *representative*, in their room and stead: and accordingly, he doth impute it unto them, and thereby make them just, and pronounce them righteous in his sight. And this is the

only way, whereby a sinner can be made righteous before God, *viz.* by his imputing a complete righteousness to it, which the soul itself puts not so much as the least finger to the performance of; but is wholly wrought out for it by another. As Rom. iv. 6. *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God IMPUTETH righteousness without works.*

And as God *imputes* the righteousness of his Son to poor sinners, that have none in, or of themselves, and can be *just* in justifying them in this way; in as much as this righteousness is such an one, that every way answers the perfect purity of his nature, and righteous law, and was wrought out on purpose for them; so, in justifying a sinner in this way, he displays the *exceeding riches of his grace*. It was free grace that *contrived* and *appointed* this righteousness for a sinner; free grace that *accepted* of it for him, when performed; and it is free grace that *imputes* it to him, puts it upon him, or makes him *righteous* therein. Hence we are said to be *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*, Rom. iii. 24. And to have redemption through

of JUSTIFICATION. 45

his blood, the forgiveness of sins (which is one part of justification) according to the riches of his grace, Eph. i. 7.

The *matter* of justification, or of the justifying righteousness of a sinner before God, as was before observed, is the righteousness of Christ, or his active and passive obedience; and the *manner* of God's justifying a sinner, by the imputation of this righteousness, regards both. God *imputes* the *passive* obedience of Christ unto the soul, or his being *obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*; whereby he satisfied justice, and thereby discharges it from all *guilt*, and freely forgives all its *sins*. And he likewise *imputes* his *active* obedience, or the obedience of Christ's life, to the soul; whereby he *makes*, and *declares* it to be *righteous* in his sight: And in both respects, there is the most bright display of *the exceeding riches of his grace*. And therefore the righteousness of Christ, by which a sinner is justified, is said to be a *gift*; a *free gift*, and a gift by *grace*: As Rom. v. 15, 16, 17. *But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one, many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the*

gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification: for, if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.—Thus the manner of a sinner's justification, with respect unto God, is by imputation, or the imputation of Christ's righteousness to him, by God the Father, of the freest grace. And,

II. With respect unto *us*, the manner of justification is by *faith*. And here I shall shew, briefly, 1. What kind of faith, justifying faith is. 2. How this faith acts towards its proper objects. And, 3. How, or in what respects, the justification of a sinner is by faith. I shall begin to shew,

1st, What *kind* of faith, justifying faith is. And in order hereto, shall observe, 1. What it is *not*. And, 2. What it *is*. And,

1. Justifying faith, is not a mere *histo-*

rical faith, or a bare assent to the truth of Christ's coming into the world to be the Saviour of men, of his dying for sinners, of his rising from the grave, and of his coming again at the last day, to be the Judge of quick and dead. This is no more than the *devils* have, who *believe and tremble*; and no more than what thousands may have, where the gospel comes, and yet *die in their sins*, and perish for ever. But,

2. Justifying faith, is a *special* faith, that is peculiar to *God's elect*; and therefore styled, *the faith of God's elect*, Tit. i. 1. And though this faith is called *common faith*, ver. 4.; yet this phrase denotes no more, than that it is common to all the elect of God; and is not to be understood, as if it was common to others, together with them. It is likewise styled *precious faith*, 2 Pet. i. 1. *To them that have obtained like precious faith with us*. And it is said to be a *gift* of God's free grace, to the saved ones, Eph. ii. 8. That same free grace, that gives them *salvation*, as *the end of their faith*, gives them *faith* as a *means* to that end. This gift of justifying faith, springs out of the grace of

election; and therefore it is said, Acts xiii. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.* And to denote the speciality of its kind, it is said to be *the faith of the operation of God, who raised Christ from the dead*, Col. ii. 12. And to be effected by the *exceeding greatness of God's power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead*, Eph i. 19, 20. But thus much as to the *kind* of justifying faith. I come to shew,

2dly, How this faith *acts* towards its proper *objects*. The objects of justifying faith are, the person of *Christ* in his death and resurrection, his blood and righteousness; and *God* the Father, in and through him, as justifying the ungodly. *Christ* is the *immediate* object, and *God* in him the *ultimate* object of this justifying faith. And how it acts towards these its objects, I am now to shew. But before I speak of its *acts*, I would just give a hint of it as it is a *principle*: for, as in nature, there must be life, before motion; so it is in grace.

Justifying faith, then, as it is a *principle*, grows not in nature's garden, is not brought into the world with us, nor ac-

quired by human endeavours; but is wrought in the soul, by the almighty energy of the Spirit of God, at the time of regeneration. And hence, the grace of faith is reckoned up among the rest, as the *fruit of the Spirit*, Gal. v. 22. When I say the principle of faith is wrought in the soul, by the *Spirit* of God, I intend thereby, *his* immediate *efficiency* therein; and not to exclude the *Father* and the *Son*, from this great work. No; all the three persons in God, have a joint *efficiency* in the work of faith; and accordingly, it is ascribed to them all: Sometimes to the *Father*, sometimes to the *Son*, and sometimes to the *Spirit*; because all have a joint hand therein. The *Father* works it by Christ, *Christ* works it from the *Father*, and the *Spirit* works it from both. For, when the appointed time comes, that a vessel of mercy is to be filled with the life of grace; God the *Father*, the great husbandman, cuts the soul off from the wild olive tree, its old stock, the first Adam, and the old covenant, and ingrafts into Christ, the second Adam, the good olive tree; and thereby brings it under the new covenant, and

gives it a new *life*, the life of grace, from Christ, its new and living root. And *Christ*, at the same instant *apprehends*, or lays hold on the soul, and secretly unites himself to it; and hereby communicates the *spirit* of grace, and the spiritual *life* of grace unto it, out of his own fulness. And the holy *Spirit* of God, at the same moment, being sent from the Father and the Son, takes possession of the soul for Christ, to form his image in it; and instantaneously gives it the *life* of grace, or a *principle* of every grace; and so, in particular, of this grace of *faith*, by his own immediate *efficiency*. Thus this grace of faith, as a *principle*, is created in the soul, by *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*; and, with respect to each of the *sacred three*, is a work of *almightiness*. But as the holy *Spirit* is the immediate efficient hereof, so, as I said, this principle of faith is wrought in the soul, by *his* almighty energy. And this principle of faith, wrought in the soul, is a spiritual *ability* to know *Christ*, and *God* in him, to have communion with him, to receive all *grace* from him, and to give all glory to him.

Hence, in its *acts*, as it is a *Christ* dis-

of JUSTIFICATION. 51

cerning faith, a *soul* transforming faith, *
 an *heart* purifying faith; so it is a *working*
 faith, *it worketh by love*: it unites the soul
 to the objects beheld; it makes *Christ*,
 and *God* in him, *precious* to the soul; it
 makes his promises precious, his ordinances
 precious, his commandments precious,
 his people precious; and enables the soul
 to lay out itself for the glory of God, in
 all holy obedience: and while it thus
 walks in *wisdom's ways*, it finds them *all*
to be pleasantness, and all her paths peace.
 But as I am not to speak of the acts of
 faith comprehensively but only of those,
 which are peculiar to it, as *justifying*; I
 shall pass over those of its acts, whereby
 it is more properly called, uniting faith,
 sanctifying faith, and working faith; and
 shall attend to the proper acts of *justifying*
 faith: for in these it *worketh not* at
 all.

Thus having hinted, how the *principle*
 of faith is wrought in the soul, and that
 it is a spiritual *ability* to know, and obey
 God in Christ; I come now to speak of
 the *acts* of this principle, as it is styled
justifying faith; or to shew, how justify-

ing faith *acts* towards Christ, and God in him, its proper *objects*.

And in order to the *actings* of faith towards these its *objects*, there must be first a *revelation* of them. The *principle* of faith, as I have said, is a spiritual ability to know and obey Christ, and God in him; and the *actings* of this *principle*, towards its *objects*, differ from it, just as the *actions* of the *eye*, in *seeing* an *object*, differ from its *power* of sight; and as the *action* of the *hand*, in *receiving* a *gift*, differs from its *power* of reception. And as the *eye*, in nature, though it be ever so good, cannot *discern* an *object*, unless it is presented before it, in *light*, the proper *medium*, whereby it may be beheld; so, neither can the *eye* of faith see Christ, unless he is *revealed* to it, by his Spirit in his word. And as the *hand*, in nature, cannot *receive* a *gift*, unless it is exhibited to it; so neither can the *hand* of faith, *receive* Christ, unless he is *held forth* thereto, and *put into it* by his Spirit and word. And therefore, says our Lord, speaking of the *holy Ghost*, *he shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you,* John xvi. 14.

And further, in order to the *revelation* of Christ, (for I begin with Christ, because he is the *immediate* object of faith) the holy Spirit of God, having wrought the principle of faith, discovers to the soul, its own miserable and wretched state by nature; as being under the guilt and power of sin, the curse of God's law, and the due desert of his eternal vengeance. And this he does, by bringing the law home to the conscience, in its purity and spirituality; as it requires perfect, universal, and perpetual obedience, in heart, lip, and life; and denounceth wrath and death upon every transgressor, for the least failure herein. Whereupon, the soul receives a full conviction of its present misery, and of its utter inability to help, or deliver itself from it; and so it dies unto all hope of life by the law. And having such a clear discerning by faith, of the depth of its misery, as it never before had, nor could have imagined, it cries out, as being in the greatest distress, *What must I do to be saved?*

And now, the soul being *sick*, has a sensible *need* of the *physician*. And being hereby *prepared* for the revelation of Christ,

the holy Spirit *reveals* him to the soul, and sets him before the *eye* of its faith, in all his fulness, as the great Saviour, as every way suitable to its case, as a miserable sinner. And hereby he makes such an alluring display of his glory to it, that attracts the whole soul after him. And as he presents the excellency of Christ to the eye of faith, so he convinces the soul of the absolute necessity of *looking* unto him alone, for all its salvation. As it is the command of God, that a perishing sinner, made sensible of its misery, should *believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*; and as it is the declaration of heaven, *that there is salvation in no other*, either person, or thing, nor in any other way, than by *faith* in him; whereupon, the soul seeing the misery and damnation that will inevitably be the lot of all unbelievers, and the happiness and salvation of all those who are enabled to believe in Christ; it attempts to put forth an *act* of faith on him, for itself, being emboldened herein by the *command* of God, and encouraged hereto by the indefinite *promises* of the gospel. And though the soul feels its utter *inability* to put forth

an *act* of faith on Christ, for itself, by reason of those weights which are upon it, those innumerable sins and fears which drag it downward towards despair; yet it is enabled so to do, by the *exceeding greatness of God's power, according to the working, the energy, or the present exerting of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right-hand, &c.* Eph. i. 19, 20. And as the soul is enabled to act faith upon Christ; so it is upon him, as presented in some *promise*, or declaration of the *gospel*. For, as the *Spirit* is the revealing *agent*, and *Christ* the revealed *object*; so the *gospel*, in the hand of the Spirit, is the revealing *light*; in which faith's *object*, being presented, it *acts* towards him as such, according to the degree of the revelation made, and assistance afforded, by that sovereign Lord, who, as he worketh herein, *divideth to every man severally as he will*.

And by the way, this shews the woful ignorance of those persons, who think *faith* is a light matter; and from thence are apt to say, What! must we do nothing to be saved, but just *believe*? This is an

easy thing indeed. But, ah! miserable souls, how wretched is their case who thus argue! This shews them to be yet *in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity*; that they never knew what the pangs of the new-birth, nor soul-plunges were: that they never experienced what it is, for a soul to have the guilt of sin charged home upon the conscience, to have the curses of the law roaring out against it, and to be stript naked of all self-righteousness and strength; and, in such a case and time, to be called to put forth an act of faith on Christ for itself; and that they never knew, what power is requisite, to enable a soul so to do. Will any say it is an easy thing to *believe*? Aye, say I, so it is, with such a *faith* that thousands have, and yet *perish*. With such a *faith*, by which the soul shelters itself under the false *refuges* of its own apprehended righteousness and strength; while it *wears its own garment*, and *eats its own bread*, i. e. works for life, or thinks to live upon its own earnings; while it only makes mention of Christ, and would be called by his name, a Christian, to take away its reproach,

Isa. iv. 1. It is an *easy* thing to *believe*, with such a *faith*, that can only stand in a *calm*; but is it an *easy* thing to *believe* in a *storm*? When the storm of God's apprehended *wrath* beats vehemently against the soul; then for it, in the face of the *tempest*, to put forth an *act* of faith on Christ for *itself*, is this an *easy* thing? If it is an *easy* thing for a *dead* man to *act*; then it is an *easy* thing for an *unregenerate*, *unquickened* soul, to put forth an *act* of saving faith upon Christ. If it is an *easy* thing for a creature, in the utmost *weakness*, to perform *mighty acts*; then, is it an *easy* thing, even for the new-born soul, in all its felt *weakness*, to put forth an *act* of *faith* on Christ for itself, in the depth of its distress, which is such a *mighty* performance? No; this is a thing, quite out of the reach of all *creature-power*. It is indeed *easy* for a soul, that has a *principle* of saving faith wrought in it, to put forth an *act* of faith on Christ, when the *power of God* enables it thereunto; as *easy* as it is to *breathe*, when respiration is *free*; as *easy* as it is for the eye to *see* a presented object, when it has a perfection of *light*, and a plenitude of *visive* spirits; and as

easy as it is for the hand to *receive* a gift that is put into it; and for the foot to *walk* unto any designed point of the compass, when both have a fulness of *life* and *spirits* for those motions: but otherwise, to put forth an act of faith, is quite out of the reach of the creature's ability. But to go on.

It is a most certain truth, that nothing less than *omnipotence* is required to enable a soul to put forth an act of faith on Christ, according to the degree of the revelation of him made unto it. If any thing less than almightiness could work faith, the power that enables a soul to believe would never have been so aggrandized, as here, in this *Ephesian* text it is; where it is said to be *his*, *i. e.* God's power; the *greatness* of his power; and the *exceeding* greatness of his power; and that souls believe, according to his *mighty* power, and to the *working* of his mighty power, *which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right-hand in the heavenly places, &c.*

Our Lord, by the almighty power of God, had a *double* resurrection from the dead; and so have his people, in confor-

mity to him. He had first a resurrection of his soul, from under all that guilt, wrath, and death which he endured for us; when the sufferings of his soul being *finished*, and divine justice, in that regard, satisfied, the joys of his Father's favour, and of his being the God of peace, both to him and his, broke out upon his spirit, like the sun from under an eclipse, and raised him up to that life of joy, in which he cried out, *It is finished!* Whereupon he commended his triumphant Spirit into the hands of his Father, bowed the head, and gave up the Ghost.—And again, he had a resurrection of his body, from under the dominion of death and the grave; when, in his whole person, he was openly discharged from all the debts which his people owed, and which he had taken upon himself to pay; and as having done it, was publicly justified, and entered upon endless life and glory, in their room and stead.—Thus *Christ*, by the power of God, had a double resurrection; and so have his people: for, by virtue of their union with him, they have a conformity to him.

They have first a resurrection of their

souls; when, by the mighty power of God, they are raised up from under all guilt, wrath, and death in the conscience, unto *faith* in Jesus; whereby they receive a full discharge from all sin, a right and title to endless life and glory, and enter into the present life of a joyful persuasion thereof; which is the first fruit of that full harvest of joy and glory, reserved for them, when they shall enter into life eternal.—And again, they shall have a resurrection of their *bodies*, at Christ's second coming; they shall be openly discharged from all sin, and publicly pronounced righteous; and as such, called to *inherit the kingdom which is prepared for them*.—

Thus the resurrection of Christ's people, in general, bears an analogy with his; and in particular the resurrection of their *souls*, when first raised up unto *faith* in him, as dying for their sins, and raised again for their justification; and is effected by the same mighty power of God, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead; according to that proportion, which was requisite to raise the head and the members.

And as the first *actings* of faith, in the

same soul, pass under various descriptions; such as, *looking unto Jesus, coming unto Christ, fleeing unto him, the city of refuge, running into his name, as a strong tower, committing the soul into his hands, and trusting in his name, for life and salvation; so the first attainings of faith, in different souls, may in some measure vary, while, as was said, they believe according to the measure of the revelation of Christ, made unto them, and to the degree of assistance afforded them; and yet in the main, they all agree, and may be summed up in this, viz. The soul's believing on Christ, for itself, for all life and salvation. Some souls have clearer views of Christ, and are enabled to believe on him more strongly, and others are more weak in faith: but yet all believe truly, that have a discerning of Christ, as the only Saviour, and trust in him alone, for all their salvation.*

There were *six cities* appointed, under the *Jewish* state, to be *refuge cities*; whither the *man-slayer* might flee, and be safe: all which typified out that fulness of refuge and safety, that there is in our one Lord Jesus for perishing sinners, that flee unto

him by faith, as the hope set before them in the gospel. And as the *man-slayer*, being to *haste* for his life unto one of *the cities of refuge*, was ordered to flee unto that city which was *nearest* to him; so it is the duty and privilege of poor sinners, when they see their miserable condition, to *haste* immediately unto *Christ*, the great *Saviour*; and unto *that* in Christ, which they have the clearest *discerning* of, and so in that regard, is the *nearest* unto them; as being a suitable *relief* for that part of their *misery*, which most sensibly *affects* them.—And thus some souls, being most sensibly touched with the guilt and filth of *sin*, have a more clear revelation of the *blood of Christ*, in its excellency and suitability, to *cleanse from all sin*, and are enabled to *haste* unto *this*, as the immediate *refuge* set before *them*.—Other souls are more sensible of their misery, as *naked* creatures, and have a more clear discovery of Christ, as a suitable, glorious remedy, in regard to his *righteousness*; and these are enabled to run into his name, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, as the *refuge* that is *next*, or most immediate unto *them*.—And others, who have a more

general sense of their misery, have a more *general* revelation of Christ's excellency; and are enabled to flee unto him for *refuge*; as a complete *Saviour*, that is every way suitable to *their* case. And though the distinct *actings* of faith on Christ, in all these, *vary*; yet in the main they *agree*, inasmuch as it is one *Christ*, that is believed on for justification and life. They all flee unto Christ for *refuge*, and so are all *safe*; though one flees unto him under one consideration, and another under another, according to that revelation they have of him, as suitable to their case. For, though the soul's first *actings* of faith on Christ, may more peculiarly respect some *one* of his distinct excellencies, than the rest, yet *all* are implied: faith acts towards a *whole* Christ; and those of his excellencies, which were not at first so distinctly viewed, and *acted* towards by the soul, are afterwards more fully *discovered*, and particularly dealt with.—Thus in *general*, justifying faith *acts* towards *Christ* its *object*.

But more *particularly*; the holy Spirit of God, as the *Spirit of wisdom and revelation*, reveals the *blood* of Christ to a sin-

burdened soul, in its infinite all-sufficiency to cleanse from all sin, in some one or other promise or declaration of the gospel; and enables the soul to *act* faith therein. Thus Rom. iii. 25. *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood.* And the particular *actings* of justifying faith, towards Christ, with regard to his blood, are, 1. A *discerning* of its all sufficiency to take away sin. 2. An *approving* of it as such. And, 3. An *entire dependance* upon it, and recourse unto it, for all pardon and peace with God. All which are comprehended in that phrase, *Faith in his blood.*

The soul that *acts* faith in Christ's blood, as on the one hand it *discerns* the infinite all-sufficiency thereof, to cleanse it from all sin; so, on the other, it sees an utter *insufficiency* in every thing else, in all its prayers, tears, sufferings, &c. to take away the least *sin*, or in the least-wise to remove, either the guilt or stain of any of its transgressions.

And as such a soul *approves* of the blood of Christ, as sufficient in itself to take away sin, and as it is appointed of God for this end; so, it *disapproves* of the

pretended efficacy of every thing else for this purpose.

Again, as such a soul has an entire *dependence* upon the precious *blood* of Christ, for all its pardon and peace with God, and as it has an utter *independence* upon every thing else, either to procure its pardon, or make its peace; so, it would not, for a world, *substitute* any thing of its own, either doings or sufferings, in the room of Christ's *blood*, or *join* them together with it; because it sees, that nothing else can take away *sin*; and also, because it would not derogate from the honour of the Redeemer's *blood*: no; the soul that acts faith in Christ's blood, falls down and adores the *Redeemer*, in the infinite all-sufficiency of his great *sacrifice*, and depends upon this alone, for its justification from all sin, in the sight of God. Faith will give none of the glory, that is due to Christ's *blood*, as it cleanseth from all sin, to any thing done or suffered by the *creature*; but sets the crown upon the Redeemer's head, and proclaims the *Lamb worthy to have all the glory of washing his people from their sins in his own blood*, Rev. i. 5.—Thus justifying faith *acts* towards

Christ, its *object*, with regard to his *passive* obedience, his *blood*, according to the revealed efficacy thereof, for a full discharge from all sin.

Again, the Spirit of Christ reveals to the soul, in and by the gospel, his *active* obedience, his *righteousness*, strictly so called; and faith *acts* towards it accordingly. Thus, Rom. i. 17. this *righteousness of God* is said to be *revealed from faith to faith*. As the righteousness of Christ is *externally* revealed in the gospel, which is the doctrine of faith; so likewise, it is *internally* revealed by his Spirit to the soul; or set before the eye of its faith, in some one or other word of the gospel, shining in upon the heart in the light of the Holy Ghost. Christ is said to be *made of God unto us righteousness, as well as redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. As he is made redemption to us, both by price and power for the forgiveness of all our sins, and for our deliverance from all enemies; so he is made righteousness to us, for the justification of our persons in the sight of God; or, for the making us positively righteous before God, to the utmost perfection: whereupon we are declared righ-

teous, have now a title to, and shall, ere long, inherit eternal life. So likewise, it is said, that Christ was *made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. And that it is *by the obedience of one, that many shall be made righteous*, Rom. v. 19. And when the Spirit of Christ takes the righteousness of Christ, and shews it to the soul, in these words, or in any other word of the gospel, he makes such a revelation of it to the mind, that it never before saw.

The soul had wont to think, that that righteousness, whereby it might find acceptance with God, and be justified before him, was something either *in*, or *done* by itself. If it had any sight of the need of Christ's blood, to cleanse it from sin; (as some sight of this, a natural man is capable of, though not of that saving sight of it, which is peculiar to the new-born, upon the Spirit's revelation;) yet still the soul thought, that it must endeavour to make itself *righteous* in the sight of God, by its own *obedience*; and that for this end it must do good works. But when the Spirit shews the righteousness of Christ,

to the faith of any soul, it is quite of another mind. Now, the soul sees, that that righteousness, which alone can make a sinner just before God, is only *in the LORD*; *i. e.* in the Lord Jesus, as the representing head of his people. It sees, that CHRIST is *made unto us righteousness*; that it is in HIM *we are made the righteousness of God*; and that, it is by HIS obedience, *that many shall be made righteous*. And as by this revelation of the Spirit, the soul sees the righteousness of Christ, in its reality, and also in its beauty, fullness, excellency, and glory; so, by faith, it *acts* towards it for justification. As this righteousness is *revealed to faith*; so faith *acts* towards this *righteousness*, or towards *Christ*, with regard to his *righteousness*; 1. By *looking* unto it. 2. By *receiving*, or embracing of it. And, 3. By *depending* upon this alone, for its only justifying righteousness before God.

As the righteousness of Christ is revealed, in the gospel, unto all nations for the obedience of faith; and revealed, by the Spirit, unto all those who have faith wrought in their hearts: so faith *acts* towards this *righteousness*, by *submitting* to

it. As is plainly implied, in what is asserted concerning unbelievers, that *they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, go about to establish their own righteousness, and have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God*, Rom. x. 3. If this is the character of an unbeliever, that he is such an one, that doth not *submit* to this righteousness of God; then the character of a believer must be just the *reverse*; and the soul that *acts* faith, in submitting to this righteousness, *looks* unto this alone, for its justification in the sight of God.

As poor finners are called to *look unto Jesus* alone, for all that fulness of *salvation* that is in him; so, in particular, they are called to look unto him, as THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS; and that when they are far from righteousness, or have none at all of their own to recommend them to God: As, Isa. xlv. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.* And, chap. xlvi. 12, 13. *Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness: I bring near my righteousness.* It is as if the Lord should say, 'Hear ye stout-hearted souls, that, in the pride of your

‘ spirits, have refused subjection to my
‘ righteousness, and have gone about
‘ making yourselves righteous, by the
‘ works of your own hands, which yet
‘ leave you in a state that is far from
‘ righteousness; I bring near my righte-
‘ ousness, I have a righteousness for you,
‘ that you never thought of; a complete
‘ glorious robe, of my own working out,
‘ in which there is a fulness of salvation
‘ for you: look therefore, upon this *my*
‘ righteousness, and be ye saved.’ And
accordingly, the soul that believeth, *looks*
away from all its own righteousness, as
being fully convinced of the vanity of
looking for salvation from thence; and
looks unto the Redeemer’s righteousness,
and to that alone, as being infinitely suf-
ficient to justify and save it. And the
language of such a soul, when it comes
unto Christ for justification of life, is the
same with that of the church, Jer. iii. 23.
Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the
hills, and from the multitude of mountains;
(from the works of our own hands, which
were once high as mountains, in our e-
steem, for security) *Truly in the LORD our*
God is the salvation of Israel. And thus,

of JUSTIFICATION. 71

Hof. xiv. 3. *Asshur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods; (our deliverers, to whom we look for salvation.) For in thee the fatherless find mercy:* it is as if they should say, we are such miserable souls, that cannot save ourselves, and have none to provide us either bread or *cloathing*, in a spiritual respect; but thou hast *all* we want: we come to thee therefore, in our starving, *naked* condition; and *look* to thee, for that bread, that *cloathing* which thou hast provided; for in thee we shall find all the mercy we can want, unto eternal life.—Thus, a poor soul, when stript *naked* of all its own *righteousness*, *looks* by faith unto Christ's, as its only justifying robe. And the eye of a believer is *single* towards Christ, in this respect; it does not look partly to *Christ*, and partly to its own *works*, to make it righteous in the sight of God. No, Christ commends his spouse, as having *doves eyes*, Song iv. 1. that look *singly* unto *him*, her glorious *Mate*, for that royal robe of his, that *wedding-garment*, which can only fit her to stand with him, in the heights of glory,

before the face of God, with the highest acceptance.

Again, justifying faith *acts* towards Christ, its object, with regard to his *righteousness*, by *receiving* or embracing of it. This righteousness is styled a gift, Rom. v. 17. And accordingly, the hand of faith *receives* it, as a gift of the Father's free love, to a naked sinner, to make it completely righteous in his sight: for, in *giving* Christ to the soul, he gives him in all his *fulness*, and so in *this*, of his glorious *righteousness*, which is infinitely full for its *justification*. And faith *receives* Christ, as God *gives* him; it *receives* Christ Jesus the Lord, as the Father's gift, in all his *fulness*, in all his glories, and so in *this*, of his being its complete *righteousness* before God; and as such it *walks* in him, in all its approaches to the Father, as the saints are exhorted to do, Col. ii. 6. As faith's eye *looks* unto this righteousness; so faith's hand *receives* it: it brings nothing to *buy* this righteousness with; nor yet doth it bring any thing to *join* with it; but merely *receives* it, in the *fulness* of its glory, and *freeness* of its bestowment.

As this righteousness is a royal grant from the throne, to *array* the *bride* of Christ, and so every believer, who, in itself, is a naked creature; so the soul by faith *receives* it, and *puts* it on, as it were; *It puts on the Lord Jesus* as its righteousness before God, enwraps itself herein, and adorns itself herewith; and hereby *makes itself ready for the marriage of the Lamb*. And in this spotless, beauteous, glorious robe, it will appear to be made ready indeed, for the enjoyment of the marriage-glory, with its royal Bridegroom, when that happy day comes on, Rev. xix. 8. An *unbeliever*, as he has no *eye* of faith, no spiritual ability to *see* Christ's righteousness; so he has no *hand* of faith, or spiritual ability to *receive* it. No; the *eye* of the natural man *looks* to his own works, to make him righteous: these he admires, bows down to, and idolatrously sets up in the room of Christ's righteousness. And as for his *hand*, it is a *working* hand, not a *receiving* hand; it *works* for righteousness, not *receives* righteousness. The natural man is too proud to be beholding to free-grace, for a righteousness before God, that is all of mere

gift, and of another's working out; this he *understands* not, this he *approves* not, to this he *submits* not. But to a *believer*, O what a glorious sight is the righteousness of Christ, in his eye, as it is the Father's free *gift*, for the justification of a sinner! And, with what gladness doth the hand of faith *receive* and embrace this gift of righteousness!

And as the soul, by faith, looks to and receives this righteousness; so it *depends* upon this alone, for its justification before God. And therefore, the apostle gives this description of believers, that they are such *that rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*, Phil. iii. 3. As they have no confidence in the *flesh*, in their external privileges, or legal performances, as their righteousness before God; so they have all their confidence in *Christ*, and his righteousness, for their complete justification in God's sight. Here they *confide*, on this they *depend*; and knowing the fulness, glory, and excellency of this righteousness, appointed of God for such a glorious end, they do it with joy. They rejoice in Christ Jesus, as having an exuberant fulness of justifi-

cation, life, and glory in him; even above what perfect Adam was capable of in innocency. And as the apostle *here* describes believers in general; so, in the succeeding *verses*, he gives us an account of himself in particular, with regard to his *distrusting* every thing of his own, and his entire *confidence* in Christ, or the *actings* of his faith towards him, in respect to his righteousness.

Verse 4. *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in flesh, I more.* It is as if he should say, ‘I have
 ‘ as much of external privilege, and legal
 ‘ performance, as any of you all; and if
 ‘ these things would stand me in any
 ‘ stead, for my righteousness before God,
 ‘ I might trust in them as much as any
 ‘ man, nay, more.’

And then he proceeds, verses 5, 6. to give a particular enumeration of his privileges and performances; *Circumcised the eighth day*, says he; *of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the*

law, blameless. It is as if he should say,
' Come, you Jews, who rest in the law,
' and make your boast of God, and see if I
' am a whit behind you, in any of your
' birth, or church privileges, and legal
' performances, in which you vainly trust;
' or rather, whether I have not more of
' those things, than many of you can
' pretend to.—Are you Hebrews, of the
' seed of Abraham, whom God chose to
' be his peculiar people? So am I. Yea,
' an Hebrew of the Hebrews; I am so, both
' by father's and mother's side; which
' many of you cannot say.—Are you of
' the stock of Israel, who as a prince with
' God, prevailed with him for the blessing?
' So am I. And I can tell you of what
' tribe too, I am of the tribe of Benjamin;
' when many of you cannot reckon up
' your genealogy.—Were you circumcised?
' So was I. And that at the eighth day
' too, the precise time appointed by God;
' which many of you cannot say.—Have
' you been observers of the law? So
' have I. As touching the law, a Pha-
' risee; of the strictest sect: and profited
' more in the Jews religion, than many of
' mine equals, who profess themselves to

‘ be *Pharisees*, of the same *sect* with me.
 ‘ —Have you been strenuous *maintainers*
 ‘ of the *Jewish religion*, and *opposers* of all
 ‘ you judged *innovations*, and *destructive*
 ‘ of the *rites* and *ceremonies* thereof?
 ‘ So have I. I was no cold half-hearted
 ‘ professor, that cared not what men be-
 ‘ lieved, or practised in religious matters;
 ‘ but was so *exceedingly zealous of the tra-*
 ‘ *ditions of the fathers*, that in this my
 ‘ blind zeal, I even *persecuted the church*
 ‘ *of God*, and verily thought I ought to do
 ‘ many things *contrary to the name of Jesus*
 ‘ *of Nazareth*; because I judged that *Je-*
 ‘ *sus*, and his *followers*, taught and prac-
 ‘ tised things contrary to the law of *Moses*,
 ‘ and the religion *established* by God him-
 ‘ self. And being *exceedingly mad against*
 ‘ *them*, I *breathed out threatenings and*
 ‘ *slaughter*, *haled men and women to prison*;
 ‘ *some I compelled to blaspheme*, and *others*
 ‘ *I persecuted even to strange cities*; so that
 ‘ in this regard, I was as great an *hero*
 ‘ as any of you all, and perhaps there is
 ‘ not a man among you, that has been
 ‘ so great a zealot as myself; *concerning*
 ‘ *zeal persecuting the church*.—And as for
 ‘ *the righteousness which is in the law*, take

‘ it in the most comprehensive sense,
 ‘ which our doctors have given of it, *I*
 ‘ *was blameless*. None could charge me
 ‘ with an unrighteous action, with any
 ‘ want of conformity to, or transgression
 ‘ of the law of God, according to that
 ‘ sense of it given by the *Rabbins*; I have
 ‘ been a person of a spotless conversation,
 ‘ of an unblemished character, *touching*
 ‘ *the righteousness which is in the law,*
 ‘ *blameless*.

Thus he drew his own picture to the
life, and presented it to them, in all the
 beautiful features of his privileges and
 performances, while he remained an *un-*
believer. ‘ And now, you *Jews*, as if he
 ‘ should say, who are fond of your own
 ‘ *righteousness*, and trust in this for your
 ‘ acceptance with God, what think you
 ‘ of such a man as I? Do not you think
 ‘ *my righteousness* was large enough to
 ‘ cover me all over, and to render me
 ‘ acceptable unto God? If any man of
 ‘ you all *think he hath whereof he might*
 ‘ *trust in the flesh, I more*. Surely I had
 ‘ righteousness enough to *vie* with you
 ‘ all, and to *outstrip* many of you. But
 ‘ come now, you *self-righteous* creatures,

‘ and I will tell you how little *worth* all
 ‘ your own *righteousness* is, in point of
 ‘ *acceptance* with God. I once thought;
 ‘ as you now do, that I had righteousness
 ‘ sufficient to justify me in the sight of
 ‘ God; but come I will tell you my *ex-*
 ‘ *perience*, how insufficient I saw the best
 ‘ righteousness of a fallen creature to be,
 ‘ what little account I made of all my
 ‘ own righteousness; and what great ac-
 ‘ count I made of *Christ’s*, when God re-
 ‘ *vealed his Son in me*, and wrought faith
 ‘ in my heart. You have seen me *exalt-*
 ‘ *ing* myself to the greatest altitude of
 ‘ that *pharisaical* perfection, I had while
 ‘ an *unbeliever*; and now you shall see
 ‘ me, as a *believer*, *laying* my *self*, and
 ‘ all my own righteousness, down at the
 ‘ feet of Jesus; shrinking into the dust,
 ‘ under a sense of all my own nothingness
 ‘ and vileness, before this Lord of glory,
 ‘ who is THE LORD MY RIGHTEOUSNESS;
 ‘ upon whom only I now *depend*, and in
 ‘ whom alone I now rejoice.’ And so
 he turns the tables, and begins his dis-
 course in the next verses, with an adver-
 sative, a *but*.

Verse 7. BUT *what things were gain to*

80 *Of the MANNER* Sect. II.

me, those I counted loss for Christ. ‘ And
‘ now, as if he should say, you poor
‘ souls, that seek to be justified by your
‘ works, see how vain a thing it is to
‘ trust in your own *righteousness*, which
‘ cannot endure the fiery inquisition of
‘ the holy *law*, and strict *justice* of God.
‘ See how it fared with me, when God
‘ brought home his law in its *spirituality*
‘ to my conscience; I soon found that
‘ none of my external privileges, and *fig-*
‘ *leaf* performances, could screen me from
‘ the storm of his avenging *wrath*. I
‘ then saw, that all my *goods*, I had been
‘ laying up for many years, and thought
‘ they would have *gained* me eternal life,
‘ were but mere *loss*; that these counter-
‘ fits would never pass for current coin;
‘ and that if I *trusted* to these, I must *lose*
‘ my soul for ever; and therefore, when
‘ my judgment was set right, I *counted*
‘ them *loss*. And as God shewed me the
‘ insufficiency of my *own* righteousness,
‘ so likewise the all-sufficiency of *Christ*’s.
‘ I then saw, that *Christ* was the only
‘ *gain*, that it was his *righteousness* alone
‘ that could *deliver* me *from death*, and
‘ give me *life*; yea, I saw such a super-

‘ excellent glory in Christ’s righteousness,
 ‘ that did infinitely exceed my own, had
 ‘ it been ever so perfect; and that I must
 ‘ part with my own, if ever I had Christ’s,
 ‘ and therefore, I freely cast all my own
 ‘ righteousnesses overboard, and counted it
 ‘ loss for Christ, that glorious object, and
 ‘ those immense treasures of gain, I should
 ‘ have in his righteousness. I parted with
 ‘ my own righteousness, indeed, in point
 ‘ of dependence; but then it was for a
 ‘ better: I cast away all my falsely sup-
 ‘ posed gain, and counted it loss for Christ;
 ‘ when once I saw the real, the infinite
 ‘ gain, of that glorious object, which I
 ‘ then received and embraced. Therefore,
 ‘ be convinced, you ignorant souls, who
 ‘ would establish your own righteousness,
 ‘ that it cannot stand you in any stead,
 ‘ and that if ever you are saved, you must
 ‘ have a better; that you must have a
 ‘ righteousness that exceeds the righteousness
 ‘ of the Scribes and Pharisees, or in no case
 ‘ you can enter into the kingdom of heaven.
 ‘ Thus, as if he should say, I have told
 ‘ you, what little account I made of all
 ‘ my pharisaical righteousness, and what
 ‘ an high value I had of Christ’s, in the

' day when God wrought *faith* in my
 ' heart; *I counted it loss for Christ*. And
 ' as I then *did* count it, so I now *do*;
 ' Christ has lost no *glory* in my eye. I will
 ' take all my *pharisaical* righteousness,
 ' while an *unbeliever*, and add to it all
 ' the righteousness I have wrought, since
 ' I *believed* in *Jesus*, and since I was an
 ' *apostle* of the *Lamb*, who *have laboured*
 ' *more abundantly than they all*; and tell
 ' you even now, what little *account* I
 ' make of all these things put together;
 ' and what an high *esteem*, at this time,
 ' I have of *Christ*, as my *justifying* dress
 ' before God.

Verse 8, 9. *Yea, doubtless, and I count*
all things, but loss, for the excellency of the
knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom
I have suffered the loss of all things, and
do count them but dung, that I may win
Christ, and be found in him, not having
mine own righteousness, which is of the law;
but that which is through the faith of Christ,
the righteousness which is of God by faith.
 ' I put all things together, all my own
 ' righteousness, while a *Pharisee*, and since
 ' an *apostle*, and tell you, *I count all thin*
 ' *but loss for Christ; for the knowledge*

of JUSTIFICATION. 83

*Christ, for the excellency of the knowledge
 of Christ Jesus my Lord; that glorious
 object, my faith now deals with, that
 anointed Saviour, whom I adore, as the
 LORD MY RIGHTEOUSNESS, in whom is
 all my salvation: For him I have suffered
 the loss of all things, and do count them
 but dung that I may win Christ. I lose
 all, to win all; or rather, I lose an all
 that is nothing, and worse than nothing,
 to gain immense treasures, an infinite
 fulness, a mass of unbounded sweetness,
 and an eternity of life and glory. I joy-
 fully part with all, for one Christ; the
 Father's Christ is infinitely enough for me.
 I cast away all my own blemished per-
 formances, for the spotless beauty of my
 lovely Lord; and count them but dung
 that I may win Christ, and be found in
 him. Oh! it is in Christ, not in myself,
 that I would be found, at the awful day
 of judgment. It is, as not having on
 mine own righteousness, which is of the
 law; I dare trust in none of my own
 obedience to God's law, which I love and
 serve, as my righteousness before God;
 nor would I be found in this garment,
 when I appear before him: but as hav-*

84 *Of the MANNER* Sect. II.

‘ing on *that righteousness which is through*
‘*the faith of Christ, the righteousness which*
‘*is of God by faith. That righteousness*
‘*which Christ has wrought out, which*
‘*God hath appointed for the justification*
‘*of a sinner, which faith sees, and re-*
‘*ceives: it is this righteousness, I would*
‘*be found in; it is upon this alone I de-*
‘*pend for justification before God, and*
‘*eternal glory with him.*’

Thus this great apostle gave an account of the actings of his faith towards Christ, with regard to his righteousness for justification. And, as all that are justified have the same *faith*; so it *acts*, in like manner, towards the righteousness of Christ for justification of life. It is this righteousness *justifying faith* looks to; it is *this* it receives and embraces; and upon *this* alone it depends. For, as all believers debase their *own* righteousness; so they exalt *Christ's*: they set the crown upon *his* head, and will for ever give him the glory of all their *justification* before God. As they give his *blood* all the glory of *cleansing* them from *sin*; so they give his *righteousness* all the glory of their *acceptance*

with God. And thus justifying faith *acts* towards *Christ* its *object*.

In the next place, I would shew briefly, how justifying faith *acts* towards *God* its *object*. And this, in short, is the soul's *looking* unto *God*, as *justifying*, through the blood and righteousness of his Son; and *expecting* all its justification from him, only upon the account of what Christ has done and suffered. And in order hereto, the blessed Spirit makes a revelation of *God* to the soul, as *justifying* a poor sinner, of the freest *grace*, and yet according to the strictest justice, through the *blood* and *righteousness* of Christ; and enables the soul to *look* unto *God*, as so justifying for itself, even when it sees nothing but ungodliness in it; and to *receive* the justifying sentence of God pronounced in the word of the gospel, concerning the soul which believes in Jesus, with respect both to the *forgiveness* of its sins, and *acceptation* of its person; and this, merely upon the truth and faithfulness of that God, who makes the declaration.

From whence, as the soul receives that present justification given it by the gospel, into its own conscience; so it *expects* the

open promulgation of this sentence, or that open justification, which shall be given it at the day of judgment, in the face of men and angels, when it shall be pronounced, *Blessed of the Father*, and called, as such, to *inherit the kingdom prepared for it, from the foundation of the world*. And as the soul that thus acts faith, sees it an impossible thing, that God should justify a sinner in any other way, than by his free grace, through the blood and righteousness of Christ; and so *looks* to him as justifying, only in this way, for its own justification and salvation; so it likewise herein regards the *glory* of God. Such a soul brings nothing with it, but *Christ*, for all its *acceptance* with God; nor dare plead any thing, as a moving *cause* of its justification and salvation, but God's free *grace*; nor doth it bring any thing of its own, to procure the divine favour; because it would not eclipse the *glory* of free grace. No; as faith *looks* for, *receives*, and *expects* justification and life, from the God of all grace, through Christ; so it gives the whole *glory* hereof to him.

Thus, as through the blood and righteousness of Christ, God is declared to be

just, in his being *the justifier of him that believes in Jesus*, Rom. iii. 26: and, in this way, to justify a sinner *freely by his grace*, Tit. iii. 3.: so faith receives this justifying sentence, proclaimed in the gospel, and brought home by the Spirit to the soul; and gives all the *glory of justification*, both as to *forgiveness and acceptance*, to the free *grace of God*, from whence alone it is received. And therefore the apostle, in the triumph of faith, challenges all the enemies of God's people, to bring in their accusations, if they have ought to say against them, with a *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* And nullifies them all, with this one word, *It is God that justifies*, Rom. viii. 33. And we are *justified*, says he, *freely by his grace*, chap. iii. 24. As we have *the forgiveness of sins, through Christ's blood, according to the riches of his grace*; so, by the same grace, he *hath made us accepted in the beloved*, Eph. i. 6, 7.—Thus, having shewn how justifying faith acts towards Christ, its *immediate*, and God in, and through him, its *ultimate object*, I proceed to the next thing proposed; which was,

3dly, *To shew how, or in what re-*

spects, the justification of a sinner is by *faith*†. When the scripture speaks of being justified by faith; in some places, it is to be taken *objectively*, and not *subjectively*; or, for *Christ*, the *object* of faith, and not for the *grace* of faith, inherent in, and acted by the soul. As, where it is said, Rom. iv. 5. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* The word *faith* here, which is said to be counted for righteousness, is not to be understood of the *act* of faith, but of *Christ* the *object* of faith; for the *act* of faith is not imputed for righteousness, but that which faith lays hold of, *i. e.* the obedience of Christ, which is the object about which the *act* of faith is conversant. And thus, verse 3. it is said, *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for right-*

† “ Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God,
 “ not because of those other graces, which do al-
 “ ways accompany it, or of good works, that are
 “ the fruits of it, Gal. iii. 11.; nor as if the grace
 “ of faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to
 “ him for justification, Rom. iv. 5.; but only as it
 “ is an instrument, by which he receiveth and ap-
 “ plieth Christ and his righteousness, John i. 12.”
 Larger Cat. Q. 73.

teousness *. Where *Christ* must necessarily be understood by the *it*, that was counted unto him for righteousness. As is plain from the three last verses of the chapter; where it is said, *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed unto him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.* Since it was the same *it* that was imputed unto *Abraham*, that shall be imputed unto *us*; hence it appears, that it was not the *act* of *Abraham's* faith that was imputed unto him for righteousness; because it is not the *act* of his faith that is imputed unto us. But it was the *object* that his faith looked to, the complete obedience of a crucified and risen *Jesus*, that was imputed unto him for righteousness; and that shall be im-

* It is exceeding observable, that it is not said, *Abraham* left his country, quitted his idolatry, abandoned his relations, or that he offered his son, and it was imputed to him for righteousness; but that *Abraham* believed *God*, and it was counted to him for righteousness, *Gen. xv. 6.*; which shews the peculiar dignity and excellency of faith. It is as singularly fitted and suited to take hold of *Christ*, and his righteousness, as a beggar's hand to receive an alms.

puted unto *us*, if we, having the same faith that he had, believe as he did, in Christ for justification, and in God as justifying in, and through him. For, it is *by the obedience of this one*, that *Abraham*, and all true *believers*, from the beginning of the world to the end thereof, even all the *many* that shall be saved, are *made righteous*, as chap. v. 19. But, as to be justified by *faith*, in *this sense*, is the same as to be justified by the *righteousness* of Christ, and so respects the *matter* of justification, which I have spoken of under the first general; so I shall pass it here, where I am treating of the *manner* of justification, which, with respect to ourselves, is by *faith*, as *subjectively* and not *objectively* taken: and I shall attend to the manner of justification by *faith*, as *inherent* in, and *acted* by the soul; or shew how, or in what respects, the justification of a sinner is thus by faith. And,

I. It is by *faith*, as it stands opposed to *works*. As saith the apostle, Rom. iii. 28. *Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* The justification of a sinner is by faith *alone*, not by faith and works *together*.

ther ; but by faith, *exclusive* of all works, both before and after faith is wrought in the soul. Works done before faith can have no influence into justification ; since *by the deeds of the law, no flesh can be justified in God's sight*. And works done after believing, are done for no such end, as to make the person righteous before God ; nor do they add a whit to his justification in his sight.. So that it is by faith *alone* that a sinner enters into a justified state. Thus, R^om. iv. 5. *To him that worketh not, but BELIEVETH on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*. It is, as if he should say, that is a justified man, that doth no good *works*, nothing at all to obtain it ; but *believeth on Christ*, for complete pardon, righteousness, and life ; and on *God*, as justifying, only in and through him, even the *ungodly*. For, as God in justifying a sinner, through the blood and righteousness of Christ, considers that soul as in itself *ungodly* ; so the soul, when it acts faith for justification, sees nothing in itself but *ungodliness* : and under this consideration, of its being a *sinner* and *ungodly*, looks out of itself, un-

to *Christ*, and unto *God* in him, for all its justification and salvation.

Thus the justification of a sinner is by faith alone; *i. e.* by *faith*, without *works*. And the apostle gives the reasons of it, Rom. iv. 16. *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.* It is of *faith*; *i. e.* of *faith alone*; (empty-handed faith, that doth nothing at all for justification, but merely receives it as a free gift) that it might be by *grace*; that God's free grace might have the whole glory of justification, and all creature boasting be for ever excluded.—And it is likewise thus of *faith*, that the promise might be *sure* to all the seed. If the promise of justification and life, had in the least depended upon the good works of the creature, it could never have been sure; but as it stands wholly upon grace, absolute grace, and is merely received by faith alone, so it stands *sure*, inviolably sure to all the *seed*, to all the heirs of promise, through all time, and unto all eternity. —Thus the justification of a sinner is by faith, as it stands opposed to works, as to the *manner* of it; or the manner

of the soul's possessing Christ's righteousness.

2. It is by *faith*, as faith is that grace which is *appointed* of God, to *receive* justification and life from him. Thus Mark xvi. 15, 16. *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.* And John iii. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* And we, faith the apostle, *have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ; and this we did; says he, as knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; or, as knowing that faith is that grace, which God hath appointed to receive justification, Gal. ii. 16.* Again,

3. The justification of a sinner is by *faith*, as God *imputes* the righteousness of his Son, and *declares* the imputation thereof, in his word, unto every *believer*, for his complete *justification*. Thus the righteousness of Christ is said to be *unto*, and *upon* all them that believe, without difference,

Rom. iii. 22. *And by him all that believe, are (declared to be) justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, Acts xiii. 39.* There is not a believer in the world, that looks to, receives, and depends upon the righteousness of Christ alone, for justification before God, but God imputes it to him, and justifies him, completely therein: For it is unto, and upon all them that believe, without difference. One believer is not *more*; and another *less* justified; because, though there may be a great deal of difference between the *faith* of one and of another, in respect of *degree*; yet all that have faith of the right *kind*, as they receive the same *righteousness*, the righteousness of Christ, for their whole and entire righteousness before God; so he *imputes* it to them, as such, and completely justifies them all equally, and alike therein. They are all, in this respect, *complete in Christ*; so complete, that nothing can be added to it, to make their justification more *full*, Col. ii. 10. And as all believers are *completely* justified in Christ, by the free-grace, and according to the strict justice of God; so in him they are *ever-*

lastingly justified. They *stand* immovably, unchangeably, and eternally in the *grace* of justification, Rom. v. 2. *They are so passed from death to life, that they shall never come into condemnation*, John v. 14. Though in themselves they are sinners, both by nature and practice; yet, as God doth not impute their sins, but the righteousness of his Son to them, for their complete justification; so they have life, everlasting life, in this respect.—But as I shall have occasion to speak more fully of *this*, under the next head; so I shall add no more here.—And thus much shall suffice for the second general, the *manner* of justification, as with respect unto God, it is by *imputation*; and with respect to *ourselves*, by *faith*.



S E C T. III.

Of the TIME of Justification.

Rom. iv. 25. iii. 26. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.—God is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jēsus.—God was justified in the Spirit.

THE next thing proposed to be considered, was, The *time* of justification. As justification is God's act, so it is to be considered, either as *immanent*, or *transient*, and timed accordingly.

1. As *immanent*, or an act of God's will, that always abideth the same in his divine mind, from eternity to eternity : and so it was from *everlasting* ; as 2 Cor. v. 19. *God was in Christ*, (who can tell how early ? Surely he was in him, by his eternal counsel, will, and covenant) *reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.*

2. The act of justification is to be con-

sidered as *transient*; or, as it is an act of God that passeth upon the creature in *time* *. And as such, it admits of a two-fold consideration.

(1.) As passing upon the whole *body* of the *elect* together, and at once, in *Christ* their *head* and *representative*. And so the *time* of it was when Christ, our Surety, made full *payment* of all the debts of his people, and received a full *acquittance*, or a full and open discharge, in their *name* and *room*. For, he *was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification*, Rom. iv. 25. As he died, as a *public* person, for our sins; so, as a *public* person, he was raised again for our justification. When God the Father *raised* him from the *dead*, he thereby did openly *discharge* him from all our sins, which before lay upon him; and in *his* discharge, *we* were discharged likewise. *He* was discharged for *us*, and *we* were discharged in *him*, as he was our great *representative*.

* “ Though, from eternity, God *decreed* to
“ justify all the elect; yet they are not *actually*
“ justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time,
“ apply Christ, and his righteousness, unto them.
“ 1 Pet. i. 2, 19, 20. Rom. viii. 30. Gal. ii. 16.
“ Tit. iii. 4, 5, 6, 7.” Conf. chap. xi. § 4.

And thus the apostle founds his triumphant challenge, to all the enemies of God's people, to bring ought against them, if they can, Rom. viii. 33, 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again. As the act of God justifying, gives being to, and is the foundation of our justification; so, he first founds his triumph here, and answers all the charges which might be brought with this, It is God that justifieth: and then he proceeds, It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again. So that, by Christ's death and resurrection, and at the time thereof, the whole body of the elect, as such, had a full discharge, a complete justification, in Christ their Head.* But,*

* Jesus Christ being once justified himself, Isa. 1. 8. 1 Tim. iii. 16.; so all his people are justified in him; and God is just in doing so, Rom. iii. 26. Christ died as a public representative for the iniquities of his people, Isa. liii. 11.; and the sacrifice and oblation he offered up was of a sweet-smelling savour unto God, Eph. v. 2. And therefore, Jehovah declares, that he is not only well-pleased for his righteousness sake, Isa. xlii. 21.; but that he is near to justify him, Isa. 1. 8.; yea, that he is justified in the Spirit,

of JUSTIFICATION. 99

(2.) Justification, as a *transient* act, is to be considered, as passing upon every individual *person* of God's chosen; and so the *time* of it is, when the soul is first enabled to *believe in Jesus*. For, with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, Rom. x. 10. And God is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, chap. iii. 26. For, notwithstanding the *secret* state of an elect person God-ward, before believing, is a state of *peace* and favour, as he has a *secret* interest in God's justifying act, and in Christ's full *discharge*; yet his *open* state, as in himself, related to old Adam, and the *first* covenant, is a state of law-charge, and so of wrath and condemnation. He is *of the works of the law*, and as a law-breaker, is under the *curse*; as the *wrath of God*, in his holy, righteous law, is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men. He is in the same common state with all the children of Adam, of whom it is said, *there is none righteous, no not one*;

1 Tim. iii. 16.: and consequently Christ's resurrection, ascension, session at his Father's right-hand, intercession for his people, and having all judgment committed to him, is an evidence that all his people are virtually justified in him as their head, and shall all rise and reign with him in due time.

and so, a child of *wrath* by nature, even as others. And there is no way, appointed of God, whereby he can pass from this open state of *wrath*, and *condemnation* by the law, into an open state of *justification* by grace, but by *faith* in Christ: for he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life, the life of *justification*; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the *wrath* of God abideth on him, John iii. 36. So that, according to the declaration of God, in his word, by which he will judge all men at the last day, no person is in a *justified* state, but he that believeth in Jesus. And therefore, the time of *justification*, as applied to a particular person, or as God's justifying act, passeth upon a sinner, in the declaration of his word, and is brought home to the conscience, is when the soul believes; or, when being warned of its misery, and acquainted with its remedy, it first flees for refuge, from the wrath to come, to lay hold upon Christ, the hope set before it. And in this sense, all that believe, and none but they, are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.



S E C T. IV.

Of the EFFECT of Justification.

ROM. V. 1. iv. 7. 2 COR. V. 14.

Being justified, by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.—

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven.—The love of Christ, who died for us, constraineth us to live unto him.

THE next thing I am to consider, is, the *effect* of justification with respect to the soul. And this is three-fold, and has respect, 1. Unto the soul's peace. 2. Unto its state. 3. Unto its obedience. To each of these, a little in order. And,

1. The *effect* of justification, to a justified soul, is *peace*. As Rom. v. 1. *Therefore, being justified, by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* As Christ, by his death, made peace with God for poor sinners, and as God the Father declared himself to be *the God of peace*, when he brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep,

through the blood of the everlasting covenant; so this complete and everlasting peace, is declared, and particularly applied to the soul, by the blessed Spirit of God, when it is enabled to believe in Christ for justification. Peace with God was the legacy our departing Lord left with his people, which was confirmed by the death of the testator. Thus, John xiv. 27. Peace, says he, I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. It is as if he should say, ‘ My dear disciples, I am just a going to leave you, just upon the point of finishing all that work which the Father gave me to do in the world, for your salvation: but when I depart, I will leave peace with you, my peace; that peace with God, I shall make by the blood of my cross, I give unto you. I do not give it partially, conditionally, and precariously; I do not give and take, as the world doth; but my peace I give unto you wholly, absolutely, and irrevocably: therefore, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Do not be troubled that I am going to leave you, as to my bodily presence; for, it

' *is expedient for you; that I go away: I go*
 ' *to prepare a place for you. When, as*
 ' *your High-Priest, I have done the work*
 ' *of making peace for you on earth, I*
 ' *have still another work to do for you*
 ' *in heaven; I must carry my peace-mak-*
 ' *ing blood, into the holiest of all, and*
 ' *sprinkle it before the face of God; and*
 ' *so reconcile that holy place, and make*
 ' *room for you to come thither; or there-*
 ' *by, prepare those mansions, those abid-*
 ' *ing places in glory, which are appoint-*
 ' *ed for you. And therefore, let not*
 ' *your heart be troubled, since my depar-*
 ' *ture from you is so much for your ad-*
 ' *vantage; neither let it be afraid, for as I*
 ' *made peace for you, by my death on*
 ' *the cross, so I will maintain it for you,*
 ' *by my life on the throne: you need not*
 ' *be afraid that there should be any after-*
 ' *breach between God and you, nor fear*
 ' *the least flaw being made in that peace*
 ' *with God, which I give unto you.*

And as this complete and everlasting
 peace with God, was made by Christ, and
 is given to his people; so it is applied, by
 the blessed Spirit, to every believer in
 particular; as our Lord promised, in the

preceeding verse: *But, says he, the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* As this verse stands connected with .. the former, we may take the scope of our Lord's words thus; 'Though I am
 ' going to leave you, I will not leave you
 ' comfortless; I leave peace with you, I give
 ' peace to you; and I will give you the
 ' Comforter, whom the Father will send in
 ' my name, to open this peace to your un-
 ' derstandings, to apply it to your hearts,
 ' and bring it to your remembrance, to
 ' your unspeakable joy, while passing
 ' through a world of trials.' And accordingly, when the Spirit of God has revealed the obedience of Christ to the soul, and enabled it to act faith thereon, for justification, he applies the blood of Christ to that soul, by bearing witness to it, of its own particular interest in the death of Jesus, and in that peace with God, made by his blood; and hereby gives it
 • peace of conscience; even true, solid, lasting peace, that will abide through life, through death, at judgment, and to eter-

nity †. And this peace, is peculiar to a justified soul, and a proper effect of justification.

An *unjustified* soul, indeed, may have some kind of *peace* of conscience, while he works for life, goes about to establish his own righteousness, and quiets his conscience with his own obedience, either present, or resolved on for the future. But this is a *false* peace; conscience is but lulled asleep, and not truly pacified: *as many as are of the works of the law*, that work to make themselves righteous before God, *are under the curse*, Gal. iii. 10.; and therefore must be wicked persons in God's account: and *there is no peace to the wicked*, saith my God, Isa. lvii. 21. *The way of peace they have not known*, Rom. iii. 17. They

† Though our author here very strongly affirms the permanency of that peace which a justified person has with God, through the blood of Christ; yet he is not to be understood, as ascertaining, that the peace of a justified person is never interrupted in a present life, which is very frequently the case, through the prevailancy of the remains of inherent corruption, especially with exercised Christians: he only means, that it is such a peace as the grounds and foundation of it cannot be utterly taken away, being Christ's legacy bequeathed to them; because he rests in his love, and his gifts and callings are without repentance.

may cry, *Peace, peace* to themselves; but *sudden destruction* shall come upon them. This miserable, delusive *peace*, cannot stand the test of God's holy law and strict justice, nor abide the storm of his indignation, which shall come down *upon every soul of man that doth evil*, that is in an unrighteous, unjustified state. The storm of God's wrath, that will meet such a soul at death, will sweep away all this false peace; and nothing but terrors will then surround it. Conscience, that was once lulled asleep, by a false apprehension of the creature's *goodness*, as if sufficient to make its *peace* with God, will then awake, and, like an enraged lion, gnaw and torment the soul for ever; when, upon the fullest *conviction*, though too late for all *remedy*; it shall see, that nothing could make peace with God, for a sinner, nor give peace to it, but the *blood and righteousness* of Christ. And thus the poor soul, being stript *naked* of all its own righteousness and peace, that *hiding-place*, whither it had fled for shelter, that *refuge of lies*, with which it had been deceived, shall stand exposed to all the curses of God's righteous law, and the amazing storm of

his vindictive wrath, which shall break-forth upon it thereby, and *drown* it in eternal *perdition*. For, the *waters* of God's indignation, *shall overflow the hiding-place* of a sinner's own righteousness, and *sweep away the refuge of lies*, its false peace, built thereupon, and drive away the naked soul, like an irresistible torrent, into the bottomless gulf of remediless torment, Isa. xxviii. 17, 18.

But he that *believeth* on *Christ*, the *foundation*, God has laid in Zion, shall never be confounded, verse 10. with 1 Pet. ii. 6. He that hath *Christ* for all his righteousness and peace, hath such a *righteousness*, such a *peace*, that shall abide for ever. That man, that is *justified* by faith, is a *perfect* man, an *upright* man, in God's account; and concerning him, the Psalmist says, *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace*, Psalm xxxvii. 37. And as it is the happiness of the righteous man to *enter into peace*, when he dies, Isa. lvii. 7.; so is it his privilege to have peace while he lives, and that even in the midst of tribulation; in the midst of outward troubles, he hath inward peace, John xvi. 33.

As for that *false* peace, which the *wicked* have in this world, as it shall perish at last, so it is often broken now, by the *flashes* of God's *law* in the conscience; which are as many earnest of that approaching storm of his fiery *indignation*, which shall quickly overtake them. And, alas! for these miserable souls, when under pressing afflictions, how are they like the *troubled sea*, that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt?—But as for the righteous man, he hath *peace*, even in the most trying circumstances; such peace, that the world can neither give, nor take, nor yet can understand. That *peace of God*, that keeps his heart and mind, through Christ Jesus, passeth all the understanding of the natural man, Phil. iv. 7. A justified soul, having his feet, his faith, shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, having peace with God, through Jesus Christ, is well prepared to pass securely through a *thorny* world. Such an one may safely tread upon all the briers of the wilderness, without fear of danger, since his shoes are like iron and brass, that will even turn a thorn, Eph. vi. 15. Deut. xxxiii. 25.—And, in a word, there is nothing can

hurt that soul, who, being *justified* by faith, has *peace* with God, neither in this world, nor that to come. So great is the privilege of that *peace*, which is the *effect* of *justification*! Again,

2. The *effect* of *justification*, with respect to the soul, may be considered, with regard to its *state*. And the state of a *justified* soul, is a state of *blessedness*. As soon as ever the soul is enabled to believe in Christ, for *justification*, and in God, as *justifying* in and through him, it passes from *death unto life*, John v. 24. It is delivered from the *curse* of the law, and all the *blessings*, both of the law and gospel come upon it. As *Christ* has *redeemed* it from the *curse* of the law; so the *blessing* of *Abraham*, comes upon it through *faith*, Gal. iii. 13, 14. And thus the apostle, speaking of a *justified* state, Rom. iv. 5. calls it a state of *blessedness*, verses 6, 7, 8. Even as *David* also describeth the *blessedness* of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, *Blessed* are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. *Blessed* is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin: and verse 9. Cometh this *blessedness* then upon the *circumcision* only,

or upon the uncircumcision also?—Thus it appears, that a *justified* state, is a state of *blessedness*.

The state of an *unjustified* soul is a state of *wrath*; and such an one is under the *curse* wherever he is, or whatever he does: as Deut. xxviii. 16, 17, 18, 19. The Lord has not only threatened to *curse* him, by sending upon him *vexation and rebuke*, as verse 20.; but even to *curse his blessings*, his outward enjoyments, as Mal. ii. 2.

But, on the contrary, a *justified* soul is *blessed* in all conditions; his enjoyments are *blessings* to him, and so are his afflictions. *All things are his*, whether comforts or crosses, life or death; *all work together for his good*, and turn to his *salvation*, 1 Cor. iii. 22. Rom. viii. 28. His very *sufferings* are *gifts* of divine favour, Phil. i. 29. And he has reason to *rejoice* even when he *falls into divers temptations*; because of that present and eternal advantage he shall reap thereby, and that peculiar *blessedness*, which attends him therein, James i. 2,—12. A *justified* soul passes on from *blessing* to *blessing*, in every changing providence; for every *change* opens to him a new scene of *blessedness*,

of JUSTIFICATION. III

to make his enjoyments thereof more full. He is *blessed* in prosperity, and *blessed* in adversity; and God over-rules both for his present and eternal advantage, and especially his *afflictions*, to increase his grace, and prepare him for his crown: so that his short-lived *afflictions*, are but *light*; since, as God works upon him by them, they work for him, a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17. A justified soul has a right to all *blessedness* now; and shall have the full enjoyment of all *blessedness* hereafter. As he is now delivered from the *curse*, and fully *blest*, even in those very *afflictions* which, in their own nature, are the fruits of the *curse*; so, when God has wrought all that good for him, which was designed by them, he shall be delivered from the very *being* of these grieving things. There shall be no grieving briar, nor pricking thorn, no sin, sorrow, nor death, to disturb that rest, or destroy that life of *blestness*, which is reserved for him in the state of glory, in the vision of God and of the Lamb for ever: as Rev. xxi. 4. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, nei-*

ther sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.—And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face; and his Name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever, chap. xxii. 3, 4, 5.

Thus the justified ones, as they are blest at all times, shall be blest to all eternity. And to acquaint them with their state of blessedness, to comfort their hearts under their present troubles, and in the expectation of their future bliss, the Lord bid the prophet, *say unto the righteous, that it shall be well with him, Isa. iii. 10. It shall be well with him in life; well with him at death; well with him at judgment; and it shall be well with him for ever.—It shall be well with him in life; for, blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is, Jer. xvii. 7, 8.—It shall be well with him at death; for, blessed are the dead that die in the LORD, Rev. xiv. 13.—It shall be well with him*

at judgment; for then he shall be openly pronounced *blessed*; and as such admitted into endless life, or into the inconceivable *blessedness of eternal life*; and so it shall be well with him for ever, Mat. xxv. 34,—46.

—Thus *blessed* is the righteous man! Thus well shall it be with him! But *wo* unto the wicked; for it shall be ill with him: his state, in all respects, is just the reverse. How distinguishing then is the favour, how great the privilege of that *blessedness of state*, which is the effect of justification! * But,

* The privileges and benefits of these persons, who have the Lord to be their righteousness, are very many.—They are not only pardoned, but justified; and their pardon is not only a fruit of mercy, but an act of justice; *God is just in justifying*, Rom. iii. 25, 26.—The justified persons are redeemed from the curse, by Christ's being made a curse for them, Gal. iii. 13.—These who are interested in Christ's righteousness, are delivered from wrath: because he was delivered up to sufferings and death, Rom. viii. 32: he can deliver from wrath, 1 Thess. i. 10.—These who are clothed with Christ's righteousness, have a sure and permanent state of justification; *There is no condemnation to them*, Rom. viii. 1.—Justified persons have a sure and firm standing in the grace and favour of God, Rom. v. 2.—These to whom Christ of his righteousness, do also receive the holy Spirit, 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6.—The prayers of justified persons are acceptable to, and powerful with God, and the Spirit encourages them to, and assists *fair shew*,

3. In the last place, I am to consider, the *effect of justification*; as it respects the

Prov. xv. 8. *The prayer of the upright is God's delight. The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities with groanings which cannot be uttered*, Rom. viii. 26.—All the outward and temporal mercies of justified persons are heightened and sweetened to them, by the spring from whence they flow, and they have a new relish. *He delivered me*, says David, *because he delighted in me*, Psalm xviii. 19. *In love to my soul*, says Hezekiah, *he hath delivered me from the pit of corruption, having cast all my sins behind his back*, Isa. xxxviii. 17.—Justified persons enjoy their temporal favours by God's promise, Heb. xi. 9.; and have a spiritual right to them by the death of Christ, *who is the heir of all things*, Heb. i. 2.—All the afflictions of justified persons *work for their good*, Rom. viii. 28. They are often allayed and mitigated, Ezra ix. 13.; they spring from God's care of them, Heb. xii. 6, 7.; they are medicinal to them, Isa. i. 25.; they are purifying to them, Heb. xii. 10, 11.; they are but short and momentary, 2 Cor. 4, 17.—Death to justified persons, who are clothed with Christ's righteousness, is of great advantage; it is theirs, 1 Cor. iii. 22. and to them *great gain*, Phil. i. 21.—Justified persons have a blessed and glorious resurrection secured to them in Christ their head; for, as they *die in the Lord*, Rom. xiv. 8.; so *they shall be made alive in Christ* 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. *It shall be raised up unto eternal life*, John vi. 54.—In a justified persons will stand assailed and acquitted is that day, because the Judge is their friend, *whose he is*, Isa. lviii. 11. and the kindly intimation issued forth, *Come, ye, blessed of my Father, It shall be your kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world*, Matth. xxv. 34.—O how privileges and inconceivably great the those who are interested in the finished of the adorable Redeemer!

soul's obedience. And as a *justified* soul is saved from wrath, and has peace with God, as it is redeemed from the curse, and brought into a state of blessedness; so it is delivered from *servile*, and enabled to yield *filial* obedience. *It is no more a servant, but a Son*; and obeys its Father, as an *heir of God through Christ*, Gal. iv. 7. As a *dear child*, it becomes a *follower of God*, and *walks in love*, as *Christ also has loved it, and given himself for it*, Eph. v. 1, 2. *The love of God shed abroad in the heart of a poor sinner, justified by his grace*, forms its own image there; and enables the soul to *love God again*, who has *first loved it*; and to *shew this love*, in *keeping his commandments*, Rom. v. 5. 1 John iv. 19. and v. 3. *The love of Christ constrains it, to live unto him, who died for it, and rose again for our justification*, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

An *unjustified* soul, as it is under the servitude of the law, so it is acted by *the spirit of bondage*; and all its obedience to God, springs from a slavish *fear of his wrath*; and the main end thereof is self-preservation and deliverance. And therefore, notwithstanding all that *fair shew*,

116 *Of the EFFECT* Sect. IV.

which it makes in the flesh, all its legal obedience which looks so specious in its own and others eyes, God will call it *an empty vine, that brings forth no fruit unto him, but all unto itself*, Hof. x. 1.

But it is quite otherwise with a *justified* soul; such an one is *under grace*, and is acted by *the Spirit of adaption*, which gives him glorious freedom, and abundant liberty to worship and serve God, as his own Father in Christ, from a principle of *love and gratitude*, for that great love manifested to him, and that full salvation bestowed upon him; and the main *end* of his obedience is to *glorify* his Father which is in heaven. And thus the *justified* soul, in his obedience, *brings forth fruit unto God*: as saith the apostle, Rom. vii. 4. *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married unto another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. To bring forth fruit unto God, is such a proper effect of justification, that it is impossible it should be found in an unjustified soul. And therefore the apostle sets forth the deliverance of the justified ones, from the*

bondage of the *law*, as a covenant of works, and so from *servile obedience* to it, by a woman's being freed from the *law of her husband*, when he is dead; and their new obligation to gospel-obedience, or to serve the *law of God in the newness of the Spirit*, by the loosed woman's being married to another man, verses 2, 3. As is evident by his applying, verse 4. what he had said in the former: *Wherefore my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ*; q. d. You are delivered from the bondage and servitude of the law, by Christ's fulfilling its requirements for you, and enduring its penalties; by which the law is become *dead to you*, and you to it. The *law*, as it is a covenant of works, that requires doing for life, and threatens death upon disobedience, has no more obedience to require of you, nor you to yield to it, than a *dead man* has to require of her that was formerly his *wife*; nor than *she* has to yield to him that was formerly her *husband*, when once the relation is broken. And then follows, *That ye might be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto*

God; q. d. You were thus *freed* from the law, that you might be *married* unto Christ, as risen from the dead; that you might be one, everlastingly one with him, your living head: and so being completely justified, in and through him, you might share with him, in the power of his endless life; and under the plenitude of his life and blessedness, be richly influenced to *bring forth fruit unto God*.

Thus the *justified* ones are fruitful in new obedience: as they now regard the glory of that God that has justified them, as the *end* of all their *obedience*; so they receive his law, from their *husband*, Christ, as the *rule* of it, and love it as such, exceedingly; and thus *serving the law of God, in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*, or in the grace of the *gospel*, and not in the terror of the law, they *bring forth fruit unto God*, verse 6.

And, by the way, I look upon this, to be the discriminating *difference* between a *regenerate* and an *unregenerate* soul. The one obeys as a *slave*, and mainly regards his own *safety* therein; the other obeys as a *Son*, and the *glory* of God is the chief

end of his obedience: or, the one lives unto himself, brings forth fruit unto himself; the other lives unto God, and brings forth fruit unto him. Thus, Rom. xiv. 7. For none of us liveth to himself, [i. e. none of us who have the life of justification bestowed on us, and the life of sanctification, or the new-creature life wrought in us] and no man [i. e. none of us] dieth to himself: But whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. And thus, when he had said of himself, and the rest of the saints, whom he styles, they which live, [i. e. a life of justification, and a life of sanctification, as the effect of Christ's death and resurrection] that the love of Christ constrained them, that they should not henceforth live unto themselves, in their conversation, but unto him who died for them, and rose again, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. he adds, verse 16. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; that is, we approve of no man, as a living man, as a man in Christ, a justified and sanctified man; after the flesh, or the first life: Yea, says he, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now

henceforth know we him no more; q. d. We do not converse with Christ now, as we once did in the days of his flesh; but as risen from the dead to a new life and glory: and those who are risen with Christ, live a new life unto God, by virtue of his resurrection; and these are the men we know and approve of, as living, believing, justified, and sanctified men. As it follows, verse 17. Therefore if any man be in Christ, [i. e. a believer in him, and so a justified man] he is a new creature; [i. e. a sanctified man, that lives a new life unto God] old things are past away; behold, all things are become new. With such an one, old dependances for life, old enjoyments, and old ends in obedience, are past away; and all things are become new: his dependances for life upon Christ, and God in him, are new; his enjoyments of God, Christ, his people, word, and ordinances, are new; and his life unto God, in obedience, is new; or what he never experienced before he was created a new in Christ Jesus.—Thus it appears, that new obedience, the soul's living unto God, or bringing forth fruit unto him, is proper unto a justified and regenerate man, and

demonstrative of his *justified* state, and of his being a *new creature*; since all *unjustified unregenerate* souls live unto *themselves*.

But, to go on.

As new *obedience* is a proper *effect* of *justification*, and properly belongs to the justified soul, so his privilege, as such, is exceeding great; in that all his works are *accepted*. Those who are washed from their sins in Christ's blood, and clothed with his righteousness, are *made kings and priests unto God, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*, Rev. i. 5, 6. with 1 Pet. ii. 5. *The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, efficaciously teacheth the saved ones, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world*, Tit. ii. 12. They maintain good works, for necessary uses, that they may be profitable unto others, and that they themselves, may not be unfruitful, Tit. iii. 8, 14.; and chiefly, that thereby they might *glorify God*; to which they are exhorted, Phil. i. 27. *Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: q. d. You saints, have nothing else to do in the world, but to live unto*

God, to glorify him, by a conversation becoming the gospel of Christ; which declares your complete justification, and secures your eternal salvation.—Thus the saints are exhorted to *do* good works, and thus they *perform* them. And all their service is *acceptable* to God, in point of *filial* obedience, though not in point of *justifying* righteousness. As for this end, they do not perform good works; so, blessed be God, for this end they do not need them. No; they have a complete justifying righteousness, wrought out by Christ, a glorious robe, which they themselves have no hand in, nor put the least finger to prepare; and are so completely justified in Christ, that nothing can be added to it, to make their justification more *full*. But though none of their good works go to the stock of their *justification*; yet all of them go to the treasure of their *filial obedience*; and are *acceptable* to God, by Jesus Christ, and shall be openly *rewarded* at his next appearing. And both the *acceptableness* of the saints service to God, and the *advantage* they themselves shall reap thereby, are proposed to them, as encouragements to be abundant and

constant in the performance of good works.

Thus, Heb. xiii. 15, 16. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good, and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well-pleased.—And he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God,* Rom. xiv. 18.; that is, in point of obedience. And therefore the apostle, for himself, and in the name of the rest of the apostles, *beseëbeth* the saints, the brethren, whose persons were already made accepted in the Beloved, in point of righteousness before God, and *exhorts them by the Lord Jesus, that as they had received of them how they ought to walk, and to please God, i. e. in point of obedience, so they would abound more and more,* 1 Theff. iv. 1.: q. d. Since the good works, the filial obedience of you justified ones, are so acceptable by Christ unto God your Father; see that you labour to be abundant and constant therein. And as the acceptableness of the saints service to God, is proposed as an encouragement to their filial obedience; so likewise the *advan-*

age which they themselves shall reap thereby.

As, 1 Cor. xv. 58, 59. *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* No; those whose persons are accepted in Christ, and their obedience accepted through him, shall have all their good works rewarded, by the same grace, that enabled them to the performance thereof. These shall find, that in keeping God's commandments there is great reward, Psalm xix. 11.

The service of God carries its own reward in it now; that peace of conscience, that joy in the Holy Ghost, that life of the divine favour, that honour God puts upon his people, in his appearances for them, and those fore-tastes of glory, they are favoured with, while walking with him, in the obedience of children, are a reward so great, that none can either know or enjoy, but those who are brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But, O the exceeding greatness of reward, that is reserved for them in the Kingdom of Christ! As all their service

now accepted; so they shall then appear to be so, by their being openly rewarded.

There is none of their service, though so small as the giving of a cup of cold water to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, that shall in any wise lose its reward, Mat. x. 41, 42. All their obedience, both in heart and life, shall be found unto praise, honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 7. And all the churches shall know, saith our Lord, that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works, Rev. ii. 23. To him that overcometh, says he, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne, chap. iii. 21. And behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me; to give every man according as his works shall be, chap. xxii. 12.

And, in short, the chief design of our Lord, in what he ordered his servant John, to write to the Asiatick churches, where he commends their obedience, and reproves what was wanted therein, was, to stir them up to a zealous performance of

good *works*; and the *motive* he used hereto was, that the *crown* of glory which he would give unto them, as the *reward* of their obedience, at his appearing and kingdom; which, in greatness, should be proportioned, according to the *degree* of their *services* done for him in the present state.

He acquaints them with those special *favours*, those particular *honours* which he had in reserve for those of his *servants*, who had most distinguished themselves in his *service*. And hence will arise all those different degrees of *glory*, in which the saints shall shine, at the *resurrection* of the *just*. They will all be bright and glorious, and shine as the stars for ever and ever; and yet as one star differeth from another star in glory, so shall it be in the *resurrection* of the dead, 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42. As the stars now shine with different *glories*, so shall the saints then: for those who have *done* and *suffered* most for Christ, in this life, shall have an higher sphere of *glory*, and shine with a superior *brightness* in the life to come.

And while the saints, with Moses, na-
respects unto this recompence of the reward

their *filial* obedience is quickened thereby. *Wherefore we labour*, says the apostle, *that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him*, 2 Cor. v. 9. They did not labour to be *accepted*, in point of *righteousness* before God; for so they already had an acceptance in Christ so full, that none of their labours could add any thing to it. But they laboured to be *accepted*, with regard to their *obedience*; or, they laboured in the whole of their conversation to *walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing*; i. e. to walk worthy of their high relation to him, those great *favours* they enjoyed from him, and that *eternal interest* they had in him, unto all *pleasing*; or, unto all *acceptable* obedience here, and to the open *acceptation* thereof, in the day of Christ.

And the earnestness of their souls herein, the apostle sets forth by *running of a race, for a prize, or crown*, 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25. *Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one obtaineth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things: now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.*

And as the prize, fore-viewed, quickens the saints in the race; so that crown of righteousness they shall receive, when their course is finished, will be a rich and abundant reward of all their labours; in which the glory of God's free grace, and the greatness of its provision, for these favourites of heaven, shall for ever shine forth. Then, they which feared the Lord, that speak often one to another, (whose thoughts, words, and works for God, he graciously regarded, and accepted here) shall be openly rewarded, and appear to be his, by that bright glory he will put upon them, in the day when he makes up his jewels. When the wicked, to their utmost horror, and everlasting confusion, shall return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not, Mal. iii. 16, 17, 18.—It being the peculiar privilege of the justified ones, to have all their obedience, thus accepted and rewarded: so that, though the good works of the saints do not go to the stock of their justifying righteousness; yet as they go to the treasure of their filial obedience, which is so acceptable to God, and shall be so rewarded

by him, there is encouragement enough for them, to have an universal and constant regard unto all God's *commandments*.—*The effect of righteousness shall be peace, quietness, and assurance for ever, Isaiah xxxii. 17.*

Thus I have considered, the doctrine of *justification*, or the justification of a sinner in the sight of God,—in the *matter* of it, *i. e.* the complete *obedience* of Jesus Christ, exclusive of all the *works* of the creature;—in the *manner* of it, as with respect unto God, it is by *imputation*, and with respect to ourselves, by *faith*;—in the *time* of it, as it respects the whole *body* of the *elect*, and every individual *person* of God's *chosen*;—and in the *effects* of it, with respect to the *soul*, as it regards its *peace*, its *state*, and its *obedience*.—And what I have briefly said hereon, I take to be the *scripture* doctrine of *justification*; and that which our *protestant* reformers earnestly contended for, at the time of their first *reformation* from *popery*, as the main *basis* on which it was founded. And this doctrine of justification, by the free-grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ, received by faith alone, was of

such great account with Luther, that he said of it, ‘The church either stood or fell, as this was maintained or rejected.’



S E C T. V.

An O B J E C T I O N, urged against the preceding Scripture-Doctrine of *Justification*, answered.

JAMES ii. 21.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered his son Isaac upon the altar?

BUT against what has been said, some may object, thus;

Object. ‘The justification of a sinner is not by *faith* alone, but by *works* also, as is plainly implied in that *text*, 1 John iii. 7. *He that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous.* And fully expressed, James ii. 24. *Ye see then how*

‘ *that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*’ To which I answer,

Answ. That the truth laid down, of justification by faith alone, is not in the least shaken by this *objection*, founded upon these *texts*, we shall now evince.

As to the first, *He that doth righteousness, is righteous*: it is not to be understood, as if that person was righteous, by his *doing* of righteousness; but that by his *doing* of righteousness, it was manifested that he was a *righteous* person. And therefore the apostle begins the verse, with *a let no man deceive you*; q. d. - Do not take every man for a *righteous* man, a *justified* man in the sight of God, that may pretend thereto; but look into his *conversation*, and see whether his *faith* in Christ for *justification*, produceth fruits of *righteousness* in his life: if not, you may depend upon it, that he is not a righteous man; if he is an unrighteous man, in the general course of his *conversation*, he is certainly such an one, that is not righteous by *imputation*: for, *he that doth righteousness, is righteous*; i. e. he is *so* to begin with, before his doing of righteousness; even *perfectly so*, as *He*, [i. e.

Christ] *is righteous*; the perfect obedience of Jesus Christ, being imputed to him, for his complete justification before God. And whoever is thus righteous by *imputation*, is likewise righteous by *impartation*, as having a principle of righteousness *imparted* to him, and *inherent* in him; and from thence he is righteous in his *conversation*. And by his thus doing of righteousness, in his conversation before *men*, it may be fully *known*, that he is such an one, that is under the imputed righteousness of Christ, for his justification before God: and therefore, verse 10. he says, *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.* He doth not say, he that doth not righteousness, is not of God, *because* he doth it not, as if the not doing of it, made him to be not of God; but by his not doing of righteousness, it is *manifest*, or made to appear, that he is not of God. And thus we are to understand him, verse 7. where, by *he that doth righteousness, is righteous*, we are to apprehend, that a righteous person's doing of righteousness, is only *evidential*, and

not *constitutive*, of him as such. And so this *text*, implies no contradiction against the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God, by *faith* alone. And,

As to the other *text*, that by *works* a man is justified, and not by *faith* only: though justification by *works* be fully express, yet it is another *kind* of justification that is here spoken of, than *that*, by *faith*, which I have asserted; and so, is no contradiction to it: the apostle Paul saith, Rom. iii, 28. *That by faith a man is justified, and not by the deeds of the law*; and the apostle James here, *that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*. And though there is a seeming contradiction between them in *terms*; yet there is really none in *sense*. Because the apostle Paul speaks of the *justification* of a sinner before God, or his real state of justification, God-ward, which is by *faith* alone; and the apostle James of the *apparency* of the truth of his *faith*, and so of his justified state before God, by his good *works* before men; by which only it can be *known* to them. So that while one asserts *real* justification before God, to be by *faith* alone; and the other, *apparent* justification

before *men*, to be by good *works*, flowing from faith; there is no contradiction, but a glorious harmony between them. Inasmuch as that *faith*, by which a sinner is justified before God, will certainly be productive of good *works*; which evidence a state of *justification* before men.

And that the apostle Paul did speak of a state of real justification before God, when he asserts it to be by *faith*, without the deeds of the law, is evident, verse 20. where he likewise excludes the deeds of the law, from having any hand in the justification of a sinner; and what kind of justification he intends, he expresseth by those words, *in his sight*. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified IN HIS SIGHT; or, before God.

And as for the apostle James, it is evident, that he spake of a state of justification before *men*, or an apparent state of justification before them, when he asserts it to be by *works*, and not by faith only: for, verse 18. he says, *Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works*: To which he replies, *Shew me thy faith WITHOUT thy works, and I will shew thee*

my faith BY *my works*. As he professeth to *shew* his *faith*, and so his *justification* by his *works*, it is plain, that he intends an apparent, or manifestative justification before *men*, when he asserts it to be by *works*. And this will further appear, by the instance he gives of Abraham's justification hereby, verses 21, 22. *Was not Abraham our Father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his Son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?* By the word *made* here, we are to understand, *manifested*; i. e. that by his works, his faith was manifested to be *perfect*; or of that perfect *kind*, to which the promise of justification is annexed. For the word *made* in this *text*, is to be understood just in the same sense as it is, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *My strength is made perfect in weakness*. As from *this* text, we are not to think that the weakness of the creature can add any *perfection* to the almighty power of God in *itself*, but only in its *manifestation*, as thereby the *power* of God appears to be *perfect*, or stands forth to be *beheld* in its own *almightiness*; so, neither from the *other* are we to apprehend, that

Abraham's works did add any *perfection* to his *faith* in itself, but only in its *manifestation*; as thereby his *faith* appeared to be *perfect*, or stood forth to be *beheld* by men, in its own *perfection*; as being of that very *kind* which receives *justification* from God, and accompanies the *salvation* of the soul: as it follows, verse 23. *And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God.* In the former part of this verse, Abraham's justification before God, is plainly asserted to be by *faith*, *he believed God*, and IT [*i. e.* the obedience of Christ, which his faith saw in the promise] *was imputed unto him for righteousness.* And then, in the latter part of the verse, his justification before *men* is plainly implied to be by *works*; in as much as his faith, so worked by love, in obedience to God's commands, that *he was called the friend of God.* And thus the apostle James, when he speaks of Abraham's justification before God, asserts it to be by *faith*, as much as Paul; and when he speaks of it by *works*, he intends that only which he had before *men.* And in this sense, the

apostle Paul asserts justification by *works*, as much as James, Rom. iv. 2. *For, if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.* This *if* here is not to be taken for an *interrogation*, a question, whether he was or not; but for a *concession*, a grant that he was. And therefore, follows, *he hath whereof to glory; but (where?) not before God.* No, no, says the apostle; had he been justified by *works*, before God, he would have had *whereof to glory before God*; but since his justification by *works*, extended only to *men*, his *glorying* was *there* limited; and all *boasting*, both from *him*, and his *seed*, is for ever excluded, by the *law of faith*, chap. iii. 27.: that is, by the *doctrine of faith*, the *gospel*; which reveals the *obedience* of Christ to be the only justifying *righteousness* of a sinner before God, as it is *imputed* to him, of the freest *grace*, and received by *faith* alone. *

* Besides what has been so pertinently advanced above, in answer to the objection urged against the free justification of guilty sinners, by the imputation of the complete obedience and finished righteousness of the divine Redeemer, received by faith, exclusive of all works done by the creature, an attention to the following particulars will throw some farther light thereon, and fully evince, that there is no con-

Thus I have endeavoured to answer the objection made against this doctrine,

tradition between the apostle Paul in affirming, *That God imputeth righteousness without works, &c.* Rom. iv. 5, 6.; and the apostle James, saying, *Ye see then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only,* James ii. 24.

In order to illustrate this we must carefully distinguish between the several sorts of persons that Paul and James had to do with.—Paul's discourse is bent against proud self-righteous *justiciaries*, who thought to build up a righteousness of their own, by which they designed both to adorn themselves in the eye of God's holiness, and to secure themselves from the sword of his justice: and therefore Paul teacheth, that no righteousness of man can weigh in God's balance, or is pleadable at the bar of justice. *We are all as an unclean thing, and our righteousness is but as filthy rags. By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified,* Rom. iii. 20, 21. But James hath to do with boasting and self-deceiving *hypocrites*, who pretend to faith, but it is a barren, idle, dead faith. They say they had faith, but they had no works, James ii. 14.; they could not shew, or evidence their faith, because they had no works: and therefore his design was, to shame, confound, and silence these hypocrites, and to demonstrate, that they had no true faith at all, but did grasp a lye, and hug an idol of their own, instead of true faith.—Paul treats of faith, as it respects *Christ's righteousness*, and as it builds and is acted only on this before God. But James speaks of faith, as it is to come forth, and to be demonstrated before *men*—The justification that James speaks of is not a justification of the *person*, but of the *faith* of Abraham, of his sincerity and integrity, Gen. xx. 12. But the justification that Paul treats of, is the jus-

I before laid down, by opening the *texts* on which it was founded; and I have

tification of the *ungodly person*, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, Rom. iv. 5, 6.—Paul treats of the *causes* of justification, he searches after the springs of it, *viz.* Christ's righteousness, and faith as receiving it: but James speaks of the *effects* of justification. A man whose person is justified before God, will certainly justify his faith and sincerity before men, by works of righteousness.—Paul speaks of the justification of a *sinner*; James treats of the approbation of a *believer*. Paul discourses of the *righteousness* that must justify, *viz.* the righteousness of Christ; James treats of the *faith* that must evidence a person justified, of what kind it must be, *viz.* not an idle, lazy, but an operative faith. Paul speaks of justification before *God*, Rom. iii. 20, 21.; James treats of justification before *men*, James ii. 18. *Shew me thy faith*; that is, prove it, if thou canst, to be a right faith, if it bring not forth good works.

Moreover, that the apostle James doth not speak of a *proper* justification of the person of a man before God, by works, might be made evident by several arguments.—The proper justification of a man is from *sins* that he hath been guilty of; not for *works of righteousness* which he hath wrought: good works are not shewed before God's tribunal; but iniquities are covered, Psalm xxxii. 1, 2.—Nothing will properly justify a person, but what is *commensurate* to the divine law, and will *satisfy* the justice of God: but no obedience of ours can do this; nothing but the finished righteousness of Christ: therefore we cannot be justified by our works; the man that is justified, is *μὴ ἐργαζόμενος*, *he that worketh not*, Rom. iv. 5.—Nothing will properly justify us, but what justified *Jesus Christ*; he could not

140 *An OBJECTION, &c.* Sect. V.

been the larger herein, in order to set *them*, and the *truth*, in a clear light.

he justified, except he had fulfilled the precept of the law, and endured the curse also in his death : therefore we cannot be justified by our works ; if we could, then would Christ have died in vain.—In a proper justification, we are justified *before God*, Rom. iii. 20, 21. But our own good works cannot be imputed unto us for a righteousness before God, because he sees so many faults, blemishes, and defects in them.—Our best works need a *pardon* ; and therefore cannot be our righteousness to justify us : that which needs forgiveness, and really deserves punishment, can never earn a reward, and be accepted for a justifying righteousness.—If we could be justified by our good works, we should justify *ourselves* ; but it is *God's act*, and not ours to justify, Rom. viii. 33. *It is God that justifieth*.—In true justification, we *receive* a righteousness and an atonement, Rom. v. 11, 17. But our works cannot make an atonement for us, or be a righteousness to us.



S E C T. VI.

The INSUFFICIENCY of legal obedience to the Justification of a Sinner.

ROM. iii. 20.

By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.

AND now, to shew the *impossibility* of a sinner's being *justified* before God, by the *works* of the law, or by his own obedience to the law, I shall take a little notice, what it is that God, by his law, requires of man; and also, for what *end* the law was given. And,

First, God, by his law, requires of every man *perfect obedience*; which is his duty to perform, although he cannot do it. As all men are creatures of God's making, and were all at once made representatively, in their natural head Adam; so in him, as their covenant head, they

were creatures of God's *governing*; when he gave him the fundamental *law* of nature, commanding him to eat of the trees of the garden, with a particular prohibition of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Gen. ii. 16, 17. *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayst freely eat: But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* And it was meet that God should govern the creature he had made both for his own *glory*, and the creature's *good*: for, as God's *manifestative glory* was concerned in his creature's obedience; so it was the *happiness* of the creature to serve its Creator, and in this way to enjoy him. God is so great, so good, and so glorious a Being, that it is the happiness of the angels in heaven to be subject to his commands; and so it was of man in paradise, to be subject to this law given him: in which, though the threatening of death, upon his disobedience, be only *expressed*; yet the promise of life, or the continuation of that blissful state he was then in possession of, for himself and his seed, upon his o-

bedience, was *implied*.—And this original *law* did summarily contain all the *ten words* given at *mount Sinai*, or the substance of the moral *law*, delivered in the *ten commandments*, by the LORD's audible voice from heaven; and wrote by him, in the *two tables of stone*, when he gave his *law*, in this peculiar manner unto *Israel*. And when this moral *law*, in the original *form* of it, was first given to *Adam*, and in him to all *mankind*, his heart was perfectly conformed thereto; and he, and so they in him, had *power* to have kept it; and it would have been his, and their *happiness*, so to have done.

But he, being a *mutable* creature, and left to the freedom of his own *will*, soon hearkened to the temptations of *Satan*, cast off his loyalty to his *Maker* and *Sovereign Lord*, and yielded subjection to the *prince of darkness*, in obeying his *dictates*, and eating of the forbidden *fruit*. In doing which, he for *himself*, and his whole *posterity*, broke the whole *law* at once. From whence, the *penalty*, or threatening, became righteously due to him and them, as the just reward of his *disobedience*, where-

144 *Legal Obedience* Sect. VI.

by many were made sinners: and so death passed upon all men in him, in whom all had sinned, Rom. v. 12, 19.

And as soon as Adam had sinned, and we in him, there was thenceforth no *life* to be had for a fallen creature, by its own *obedience* to the law: because the *law* being once *broken*, Adam and every one of his *race*, were looked upon in the eye of the law, as *transgressors*; and therefore the righteous *law*, could do nothing to *justify* a *sinner*; it became *weak*, in this regard, through our *flesh*, or corrupt nature, Rom. viii. 3: But all the power it had, considered as *broken*, was to thunder out curse and wrath, against every soul of man that had done evil.

And besides the *guilt* of the first transgression, on which account Adam, and all his *posterity*, were at once laid under the curse; from which they could never deliver themselves, and so no life for them by a broken *law*, which bound them over to punishment; besides this, I say, there was an universal *pollution* of nature, that overspread the soul of Adam, the *curse* taking hold upon him in the very *instant* of his disobedience. The threa-

tering was, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*; or, *in dying thou shalt die*. In which was contained *death* spiritual, temporal, and eternal, as the just *wages of sin*. And the *first* of these was instantly executed upon him: in that very day, hour, and moment, in which he *sinned*, he *died*, in his soul, or spirit, with regard to that life of holiness, and perfect conformity to the law, which before he was possessed of: and thereby he lost all his *power* to fulfil the law, or to yield such an obedience as the holy law of God requires, or can accept. The law *requires* perfect obedience, and can *accept* of no less; and Adam having lost all his moral *rectitude*, he was utterly incapable to fulfil the law. And as it was with Adam in this regard, on account of his *first sin*, so it is with every one of his *descendants*, that proceed from him by ordinary generation: as they became *guilty* in *his* first transgression, so coming into the world, in *union* to him, as their covenant-head, standing together with him, under the same broken *law*, they become *filthy* likewise; the contagion of sin overspreads the whole soul, as soon as ever it informs the body.

And thus every child of Adam, being *shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin*, comes forth into this world a *sinner*, with a defiled nature, a *carnal mind*, or corrupt soul, *which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*, Psalm li. 5. Rom. viii. 7.

And that *infants* are born *sinners*, appears from Rom. v. 14.; where the apostle, proving that sin was in the world, before the giving of the law at *mount Sinai*, in that *death reigned from Adam to Moses*, gives the death of *infants* as an instance of their being *sinners*. Nevertheless, says he, *death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression*: that is, over *infants*, who were not capable of sinning *actually*, as Adam did; but they being *guilty in him*, and *filthy from him*, the law of God finds them *sinners*, and so *death, the wages of sin*, seizes upon them.

Thus we are *sinners by nature*, before we are so by *practice*: and *none can bring a clean thing out of an unclean; no not one*, Job xiv. 4. There can be no pure *obedience* yielded to God's holy law, such as it

requires, by *filthy, abominable man*. And as *Adam*, upon his first sin, became *guilty*, and *we* in him; and as *he* instantly there-upon became *filthy*, and *we* as soon as we have a being; so there can be no *life* for a fallen creature, by the works of the law. For, *first*, he has already *broken* the law, and so is under the *curse*. And, *secondly*, he has lost his *power* to obey it; and so cannot obtain the *blessing*. And therefore, when Adam had sinned, *The LORD God drove out the man from the garden of Eden, and placed cherubims and a flaming sword, that turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life*, Gen. iii. 24. This did signify to him, and to all his posterity, that now he had broken the law, there was no life for them by their own obedience; or that it was impossible that fallen man, should have life by his obedience to the law, as Adam was to have had in *Paradise*; and that whoever should attempt it that way, must be inevitably destroyed by the *flaming-sword* of God's justice, *which turned every way*, towards every one of the commandments, which man had broken, to keep the sinner from life by the law. And therefore, the

apostle says, That as many as in vain, attempt to obtain life by the law, are under the *curse*, Gal. iii. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them.*

Thus there is no life for a fallen creature by the works of the law; because he has lost his *power* to yield such an obedience as the law requires. For, the eternal law of God *requires* the same perfect, perpetual obedience, now man is *fallen*, and has lost his *strength*, as it did when he was *upright*, and had *power* to perform it, and that *righteously* too. Because, when the law was first given to Adam, and in him to all *mankind*, he had *power* to have kept it; and though man, by sin, has lost his power to *obey*, yet God has not lost his power to *command*. And therefore, every man that cometh into this world, notwithstanding his being born a *sinner*, and previously under the *curse*, is bound to yield a perfect *obedience* to God's holy law, in thought, word, and deed; in heart, lip, and life, from his birth, to his death, without the least

failure, or wry step; and upon default hereof, he righteously falls under the *condemnation* of the law, and the fiery indignation of a sin-revenging God; which must be born, either by *himself* or his *Surety*, as, blessed be God, it hath been by the *Surety*, *Christ*, for all that shall be *saved*. And as for those that *perish*, they must bear the weight of their own *sins*, and of God's inexpressible *wrath*, breaking forth upon them, through the curses of a broken law, in the torments of hell for ever.

And this shews the great misery, and cruel bondage we are in by nature, by reason of *sin*, as being under the *law*, which is the *ministration* of death, 2 Cor. iii. 7. It *commands* duty, and that *righteously*, but can give no *strength*; and this was shadowed forth by the *bondage* the children of *Israel* were in, in *Egypt*, under *Pharaoh*, and his cruel *task-masters*; who commanded the *full tale of brick*, and yet *afforded no straw*. And it was an *unrighteous* thing in *them*, thus to command the *Israelites*, and then to *beat* them for the non-performance of that, which they never had *ability* to do; yet, as was said,

it is a *righteous* thing with God, according to his law, to command perfect *obedience* of *fallen* man, and to curse him to *death*, upon default hereof; because he once had power to have yielded it, and by his own sin deprived himself hereof. But however righteous it is, (as those that perish shall one day own, *When every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God*, Rom. iii. 19.) yet the misery of man by reason hereof, is exceeding great. And,

Secondly, To *shew* this, *viz.* the misery of man, by sin, as being under the exacting and condemning law, and so the need he had of a Saviour, was one great end of the giving of the law at mount Sinai. For, until the law, says the apostle, *Sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law*, Rom. v. 13. How is that? Why, it is not to be understood, as if God did not impute it; for that he did, is evident, in that he inflicted the punishment thereof, the wages due to it, *death: for death reigned from Adam to Moses*, as in the next verse. But the meaning is, that during that tract of time, from Adam to Moses, the consciences of men

were grown in a great measure *secure*, and not having that just sense they ought to have had of the law's severity, (as it was given out to Adam, and to *them* in him) they did not do their office, in condemning for sin. When they did evil, they did not *impute sin* unto *themselves*; or, at least, not in such a manner as they ought, or was agreeable to the strictness of the holy law; and therefore it amounted to little more, nay, no more, in the phrase of the Holy Ghost, than a *non-imputation* of it. And therefore God would have his law come forth in a new edition, with the tremendous Majesty, and amazing terror of a God, *glorious in HOLINESS*; when he came down on mount Sinai, in flaming fire, with thunders, and lightnings, and a great earthquake; and the voice of a trumpet, sounding exceeding loud, to summons the people to hear the voice of their Creator, God, in his holy law, which he summed up, and gave in ten words, or the *ten commandments*, Exod. xix. 16, &c. and xx. 1, &c. Whereupon the people removed, and stood afar off; as struck with the amazing purity of God's nature, displayed in his holy law; while

he appeared as *a consuming fire*, to shew his just vengeance against all *law-breakers*: and they being *guilty*, and *self-condemned*, began to see their need of a *Mediator*; and said to Moses, (the *typical one*) *Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die*, verses 18, 19.—Thus the law entered that the offence might abound; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful; or appear to be sinful sin indeed, Rom. v. 20. and vii. 13.

The end of the law's being given on mount Sinai, to fallen man, was not that he should obey it for *life*; but that, by the apparent straightness of the rule, the crookedness of his *ways* might be manifest; and that by the strict purity of this holy law, now drawn out in all its beautiful lineaments, the defilement of man's *nature*, and the odiousness of his *features*, in his disconformity thereto, might appear: and that by this law, in the hand of the Spirit, which was at first *ordained unto life* but now by *sin*, become *the minister of death*, the sinner might be killed hopes of life therefrom, *the offence* by abounding in his sight unto death; th

so by *this* he might be prepared to receive the *free gift* of life in Christ, and the superabounding *grace* of God, *reigning through righteousness*, unto eternal life by him.

Again, the *Sinai* law was given, that *Christ* might be made *under* it, to fulfil its *requirements*, and suffer its *penalties* for his people; to make them *righteous* by *his obedience* to it, or the *active* obedience of his *life*, and to redeem them from the curse of it by his *passive* obedience, or his meritorious *death*. And that thus *fulfilling* it, he might become *the end* of it *for righteousness* unto them, and for ever deliver them from it, as it is a covenant of works; that so from *him*, their Saviour-King, they might receive this royal *law*, as a *rule* of life, to square their obedience by; which is designed to glorify God, and not to obtain salvation from: and thus in love, *Serve it, in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*, Rom. v. 19. Gal. iii. 13. with chap. iv. 4, 5. Rom. x. 4. 1 Cor. ix. 21. Rom. vii. 6.

Thus it appears, that the *law* was given for ends *subservient* to the *gospel*; and not

154 *Legal OBEDIENCE* Sect: VI.

to *oppose* and *destroy* the gospel. For which end the corrupt nature of man doth perversly use it, in endeavouring to *obey* it for *righteousness* unto *life*, when there can be no life had thereby. Not but that the promise of *life*, upon the creature's *obedience*, is contained in the *law*; as the threatening of *death* on his disobedience: For *Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man that doth those things, shall live by them*; as the apostle declares, Rom. x. 5. But then the *sinner* has already broken the law, and lost his *power* to fulfil it; and on both accounts, it is impossible for *him* to obtain *life* by it: and to *attempt* the same, is a *God-dishonouring*, and a *soul-destroying* thing. The soul that seeks life by the law, *dishonours* God, in that it does its utmost to *oppose* the great *design* of his infinite wisdom and grace, in saving sinners by his Son: and it *destroys* itself, in seeking the *blessing* in such a way, wherein it is impossible to be had; and whereby it must inevitably fall under the *curse*. And such a soul, in *doing* for life, runs quite counter to God's way of *believing* for life: and *he that believeth not the*

Son, (living and dying in that state) *shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him,* John iii. 36. which will sink him into the abyfs of unutterable and eternal torment. But it may be said,

‘ You talk of *doing* for life, and *trusting* to our own obedience for *acceptance* with God, and that this is a *soul-destroying* thing: But who is there that goes about it? Do not all that profess the name of *Christ*, believe that he died to *save* mankind? But we must not from thence sit *still*, and do nothing *ourselves*; we must do what we *can*, and what we cannot *do*, Christ will make up by his merit, and God will *forgive* us our sins.’

And so the person that makes this objection, would not be thought to *seek life by the works of the law*; but is for salvation in a *mixed* way, partly by *works*, and partly by *grace*. But as no such thing can be, for grace and works, in the point of *salvation*, can no more *mix* than *iron and clay*; so the person that seeks life at *all*, by his own works, will be found to seek it *wholly* by the works of the law, if what Paul says is true, Rom. xi. 6. *And*

156 *Legal Obedience* Sect. VI.

if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work. It must be wholly of works, or wholly of grace. And therefore every man must stand either on the side of works, or on the side of grace. And as it is God's way to save sinners alone by his free grace; so every soul that shall be saved, is made willing to be saved in this way. And that soul that is not willing to have salvation alone by God's free grace in Christ, without the least regard to his own works, in point of acceptance, must for ever go without it. And as for that soul, whoever he be, that adheres, in the least, to his own works, he will be found to be of the works of the law; and as such, must inevitably fall under the curse: for he, adhering to the law, chooses to stand at its bar; and that requiring of him perfect obedience, which he cannot perform, (although it is his duty) it will curse him to death for the want of it. Such a soul, in attempting to do any thing for life, tacitly says, that he is able to keep the whole law; and so out of his own mouth will be judged

and condemned for the non-performance of it.

Little do souls know, what a dreadful *task* they undertake, when they go about *working for life*, and to *establish their own righteousness*. They reject the great, full, and free *salvation* of God in the *gospel*, and bind themselves over to the *condemnation* of a broken *law*, and to the fiery *indignation* of a sin-revenging God; and will find it a most *fearful thing* to *fall* into his *hands*. And whoever thou art, soul, that art for *doing* for life, thou wilt find *enough* to do; for no less than to fulfil the *whole law* doth God *require* of thee thereby. But it may be further said;

‘Why, then, we may even *throw away the law*, cast off *subjection* to it, and live as we *list*.’

But, hold, man; thou art *under the law*, and canst not so easily deliver thyself from its *yoke*. It bids thee *do*, and do *perfectly*: and though thou canst not yield such an obedience as it requires, yet thou art indispensibly bound to do what thou *canst*; (yea, and infinitely more than is in thy power to perform) and thou oughtest to do thy utmost, as a

158 *Legal* OBEDIENCE Sect. VI.

creature, in point of *obedience* to God, thy Creator and Preserver. And he will regard the acts of thy moral righteousness; and, in the bounties of his providence, reward thy obedience, with good things, in this present life. So that, in this respect, thou wilt not serve an hard master: For *whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free*, Eph. iv. 8. And hence there is *encouragement* enough for fallen man, to use his utmost *diligence* to do what God requires of him in his *law*. But if he would be *saved*, he must seek salvation in another *way*; even in that way wherein God has declared it may be had.

For, if a sinful creature, will obey the *law*, with an eye to make himself *righteous* in the sight of God, and to obtain eternal *life* thereby; as this was not God's end in giving the *law* to fallen man, so he will say to such an one, *Who hath required these things at your hands?* And cast all his *obedience* as *dung*, and abominable *filth*, into his face, to his everlasting *shame* and utter *confusion*: for, in point of *righteousness* before God, nothing less than

perfect obedience can be accepted; which a fallen creature cannot perform: and God having appointed the obedience of his Son, to be the only justifying righteousness of a sinner; if a sinful creature sets aside the perfect obedience of Christ, by introducing his own imperfect obedience in the stead thereof; or presents his own filthy rags; to join with Christ's spotless, glorious robe, in order to obtain life by the works of his own hands, when God has declared, that it is only to be had by his free gift; it is a most daring affront to the grace of God in the gospel, and to the justice of God in the law. And the condemnation of such a soul, will be exceedingly more aggravated, and his punishment more intollerable, that thus adheres to the law, under the promulgation of the gospel, than that of the heathens who perish, not having heard of the Name of Christ. And thus it is a dreadful thing, for a poor sinner, to attempt to do any thing himself, that so he may inherit eternal life. For, if he will enter into life that way, he must keep all the commandments, in heart, lip, and life, without the least failure continually, which he can never do; and so runs himself upon

the flaming Sword of God's *justice*, in his fiery *law*; and dying in that state, he must *suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy*. But again, it may be said;

' If there is no such thing, as life to
' be had for a fallen creature, by its
' own obedience to the law, then it is
' made void.'

I answer, with the apostle, *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law*, Rom. iii. 31. It is *those* destroy the *law*, who would put it off with their own *imperfect* obedience: for thereby, they tacitly say, that the *law* is not so strict and holy as it once was; nor so binding to the creature, either in its requirements of duty, or obligation to punishment, as it was wont to be. But as for *those* who assert, that the law of God is an eternal rule of righteousness, and that it indispensibly requires of every man that is under it, as a covenant of works, perfect and perpetual obedience, which is the creature's duty to perform, although he cannot do it; and that upon default hereof, it righteously binds the transgressor over to punishment, and so set it *aside*, and cease

to obey it for life; these *establiſh the law*: **in** that they, by faith, take hold of Christ's *obedience*, who has fulfilled it perfectly, **and** is become the *end of it for righteousness*, to every one that believeth; **and** in **that**, to all unbelievers who remain under **it**, they assert its equity and eternity, in requiring of them complete, and constant obedience, and binding them over to death, both in soul and body, in time and to eternity, for the non-performance thereof.

Thus, as it is the *duty* of the creature, man, to *do* whatever his Creator commands in his holy law, which yet he *cannot* do: so it appears to be utterly *impossible* for him to be *justified* by his own obedience; and the *misery* of man, with regard to the *law*, is exceeding great indeed: and therefore, the good news the *gospel* brings must needs be *glad tidings*; as it reveals pardon and life for a *sinner*, through the complete *obedience* of Jesus Christ, *imputed* to him for his justifying *righteousness* before God, which is to be received by *faith* alone.



S E C T. VII.

The CONCLUSION.

ISA. xlv. 24.

*Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I
righteousness.*

IN the last place, I shall add something
by way of *use* from what has been
said, as a conclusion of the whole.
And,

1. Since the *justification* of a sinner is
by the complete *obedience* of Jesus Christ,
imputed to him, and received by *faith*,
and produceth such great and glorious
effects; we may hence learn, what reason
we have to *admire* that infinity of *wisdom*,
which shines forth in the *contrivance* of
this wonder; and to adore that immen-
sity of *grace* which is displayed in this glo-
rious *provision* made for the favourites of

Sect. VII. *The CONCLUSION.* 163

heaven *! When the beloved John was favoured with a visionary sight of the *the woman-bride, the Lamb's wife, as clothed with Christ, the Sun of righteousness,*

* This divine righteousness of the adorable Redeemer, which is the alone ground of a guilty sinner's justification, has many ingredients in it, and peculiar excellencies appertaining to it, that should excite wonder and admiration in these who have had it imputed unto them. It is not only in itself, a full, sufficient, complete, and meritorious righteousness; but a righteousness of God's contrivance, Psal. lxxxix. 19, 20. Isa. xlii. 6, 7.;—of God's working out, Heb. ii. 17. John xvii. 4, 19, 30.;—of God's approving, Isa. xlii. 21.;—of God's accepting, Eph. v. 2.;—of God's revealing, Rom. i. 17. iii. 21.;—of God's bringing near, Heb. ix. 23, 24. Isa. xlv. 13.:—But it is also a righteousness by which the law is magnified, Isa. xlii. 21.;—justice satisfied, Rom. viii. 34. Psalm lxxxv. 10.;—sin expiated, Heb. i. 3. ix. 26.;—transgression finished, Dan. ix. 24.—wrath appeased, and deliverance from it obtained, Micah vii. 18. 1 Thess. i. 10.;—the curse removed, Gal. iii. 13.;—the guilty assailed, Rom. viii. 33, 34.;—freedom from condemnation secured, Rom. viii. 1.;—the sinner eternally saved, Isa. xlv. 17.;—Heaven purchased, Heb. x. 19, 20.;—God glorified, Isa. xlix. 3. John xvii. 4.;—Christ honoured, Isa. liii. 12. Phil. ii. 8, 9.;—believers adorned and exalted, Isaiah lxi. 10. Psalm lxxxix. 16.:—And, to crown all, it is a permanent and an everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24. Isaiah xlv. 17.—What reason then have the redeemed ones to be filled with wonder and admiration in contemplating the finished surety-righteousness!

164 *The CONCLUSION.* Sect. VII.

and shining forth in the resplendent rays of her Bridegroom's glory; he says, he saw a WONDER, Rev. xii. 1. And a wonder it is indeed; so great, that it calls for the admiration both of men and of angels. This is one of those glorious things, that by the gospel is revealed unto us, *Which the angels desire to look into*, 1 Pet. i. 12. And while sinful men have the forgiveness of their sins, through Christ's blood, and the acceptance of their persons, in him the Beloved, according to the riches of the Father's grace, wherein he has abounded towards them, in all wisdom and prudence; it becomes them to admire, and adore the same, and to cry out, with the apostle, *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* Eph. i. 6, 7, 8. Rom. xi. 33. That the obedience of the Son of God should be made our righteousness, the righteousness of a sinner, to his complete justification before God, is such a project of infinite wisdom, such a provision of infinite grace, for the salvation of God's chosen, that it every way becomes the great JE-

SECT. VII. *The* CONCLUSION. 165

HOVAH! And will be the endless wonder of men and angels!

2. Since the justification of a sinner is wholly by the righteousness of another, which is a *way of life above* nature, above being discovered by nature's *light*, and seen by nature's *eye*, or discovered by the light of the *law*, and discerned by natural *reason*; we may hence learn, what an absolute necessity there is of a supernatural *revelation* thereof, in order to the soul's receiving of this *righteousness*, and so of the grace of *justification* thereby. This is one of those *things* that God has *prepared* for his people, that never entered *into the heart* of the natural man to conceive of, which he has neither *known* nor *can* understand; and therefore deems it *foolishness*, or a foolish thing, for any to think they shall be justified by the obedience of Christ, exclusive of all their own works. But the people of God, *receive not the spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that they may know the things which are freely given them of God. And this, of the free gift of righteousness, is revealed unto them by his Spirit, though it is one of those deep things of God, which*

are hidden from the *natural man*; and which are impossible to be known by any, but heaven-born souls, under a special *revelation* from above, 1 Cor. ii. 6, &c.

3. Since the *justification* of a sinner is by the *obedience* of Christ alone; we may hence learn, how greatly *important* the *knowledge* thereof is! The *knowledge* of this righteousness, must needs be of the utmost *importance*, since *ignorance* of it, and *non-submission* to it, (which always go together) leave the soul in an *unrighteous* state, Rom. ix. 31, 32. and x. 3. All those miserable souls, who are *ignorant* of Christ's *righteousness*, go about to *establish* their own *righteousness*; and, alas! *The bed is shorter, than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower, than that he can wrap himself in it*, Isa. xxviii. 20. There is no true *rest* for a *sinner*, from the *works* of its own hands; no *covering* for a *naked* soul, from the *fig-leaves* of its own *righteousness*, though ever so artfully sewed together. Our Lord told his *disciples*, that *except* their *righteousness* did exceed the *righteousness* of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, they should in no case enter into the *kingdom of heaven*, Mat. v. 20. These

SECT. VII. *The* CONCLUSION. 167

Scribes and Pharisees were the *zealous*, the *religious* men of that age, the strict observers of *Moses's* law, that trusted in *themselves*, that they were *righteous*, by their own *legal* performances, and thought to get to *heaven* by means thereof. But our Lord declares, that none shall ever come *there*, but those who have a *better* righteousness, a *righteousness* that exceeds a *pharisaical* righteousness; *i. e.* such a righteousness, that every way answers to all the extensive requirements of the *law*, in heart, lip, and life; and this is no other than the *righteousness* of Christ, imputed to poor *sinners*, or made *theirs* by *imputation*; in which, being completely *justified*, according to *law* and *justice*, they shall, as *righteous* persons, be admitted into the kingdom of *heaven*, or into the glory of the heavenly *state*; while all those who trust in their own *righteousness*, and think they have done *many wonderful works*, which they dare plead for acceptance with God, shall be sent away from Christ, into eternal *misery*, with a *depart from me, ye workers of iniquity*, Matth. vii. 22.

And as our Lord, in this his *sermon*

upon the *mount*, had been expounding the law of God, in its *spirituality*, as extending to the *heart*, as well as *life*; and asserting the necessity of *keeping* the commandments, in the same extensive manner, that the law *required*, in order to make a person *righteous*; so, in the conclusion thereof, he says, *Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock, verses 24, 25.* These *sayings* of our Lord, contain the *substance* of the moral law, and the *doing* of them unto *righteousness* before God, is by *believing*; as faith lays hold on Christ, who has *obeyed* the law perfectly, as the *representative* of his people: on which account, *they* may be said to have done, or *fulfilled*, the law in him; his *obedience*, being *imputed* unto *them*, for their complete *justification* before God.

As the *Surety's payment*, among men, is accounted to the *debtor*, and is the same, in the eye of the *law*, and as effectual for his full *discharge*, as if he himself had

Sect. VII. *The CONCLUSION.* 169

paid the *debt*. And he that thus *doth* the law, or these *sayings* of Christ, he *likens* him unto a *wise man*, who built his house upon a rock. It is a piece of natural wisdom, to lay a good foundation for a stately structure; and the most firm, that any house can be built on, is that of a rock. And he that is spiritually *wise*, *wise unto salvation*, lays the whole stress of it, and builds all his *hope* of life, upon Christ, the *rock* of ages; in which it appears, that he is *wise* indeed: for, as in nature, a house that is built upon a rock, will stand the storm; so the soul that is built upon Christ shall never be removed: the rain may descend, the floods come, and the winds beat; afflictions, temptations, and trials of all kinds, may beat vehemently against that soul; but shall never destroy its salvation, nor make it ashamed of its hope. No; Christ, the rock of immutability, will hold it *unshaken*, in a state of salvation, through life, through death, at judgment, and for ever.—Such a soul stands as *immoveable*, in the grace of justification and life, as the rock itself on which it is founded: *Because I live*, saith our Lord, *ye shall live also*, John xiv. 19. Christ's

170 *The CONCLUSION.* Sect. VII.

life is the life of that *soul*, that depends upon him alone, for all its justification, and eternal salvation. And therefore the *wisdom* of faith is great indeed! in that it foresees the storm, and thus provides against it.

But he, saith our Lord, that beareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not [i. e. that beareth the law's requirements, and endeavours to obey the same, for righteousness before God, and so doth them not; because his obedience cannot come up to that perfection which the law requires] shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it, Matth. vii. 26; 27, Oh! the folly of that poor sinner, who lays the stress of his salvation, and builds his hope of life, upon his own righteousness! For this sandy foundation cannot endure the storms of divine wrath, which shall be revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men; nor secure the soul from being driven away, by the tempest of God's anger, and the floods of his indignation,

Sect. VII. *The CONCLUSION.* 171

into the abyſs of eternal *miſery*. The *houſe fell*, that was thus built upon the *ſand*, and *great was the fall of it!* Oh! what a miſerable diſappointment will it be to that ſoul, that goes down to the chambers of eternal death, with this lie of his own righteouſneſs in his right-hand; from which he had all along hoped for eternal life! When this way, that ſeemed right to him in his own eyes, as if it would lead him to everlaſting life, (by his depending thereon) ſhall end in eternal death! The hope of the hypocrite [or, of him that truſts in himſelf, that he is righteous, by his own external performances, when yet his heart is far from that conformity to God, which the law requires] ſhall periſh, at the giving up of the ghoſt. His hope [i. e. his ſalvation hoped for] ſhall then be cut off. He ſhall lean upon his houſe, [i. e. his own righteouſneſs, which he had raiſed up, in his imagination, to ſhelter him from the ſtorm of divine vengeance] but it ſhall not ſtand; he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not endure, Job viii. 13, 14, 15. No; this houſe of his ſhall be as ſoon deſtroyed, by the ſtorm of God's indignation, as a ſpider's web is ſwept down by

172 *The CONCLUSION.* Sect. VII.

the besom that comes against it; and the miserable soul, that trusted herein, shall be driven away into eternal perdition.

Thus an error in the *foundation* will prove *fatal* to the building; and therefore the *knowledge* of *Christ*, as the alone way of a sinner's *justification* and *life*, must needs be of the highest *importance*; since no other *refuge* can stand the *storm*, but *Christ*, as THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS; this glorious *hiding-place* which God has prepared for poor sinners, whither they may *run*, and be for ever *safe*. And as for *those*, who live and die in *ignorance* of, and *non-submission* to the righteousness of *Christ*, they will certainly *die* in *their sins*, and *perish* for ever. They will all be found *filthy* at the day of judgment, that have not been enabled to *believe* in *Christ's blood*, for cleansing from all sin; they will all be found *unjust*, at that awful day, that have not *believed* in the Redeemer's *righteousness*, for their justification before God; and so must remain *for ever*: for, concerning them, it will then be said, *He that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is unjust, let him be unjust still;*

Sect. VII. *The CONCLUSION.* 173

i. e. let him *abide* so to an endless *eternity*.

But,

4. Since there is but one *way* for a sinner to be *justified* before God, and that is by the *obedience* of Christ alone; this informs us, what great *folly* those persons are guilty of, who *press* poor sinners to obey the *law*, to make themselves *righteous* in the sight of God, when there is no law given that can give life unto them; and how *dangerous* it is for souls, to sit under such a ministry, that naturally *misleads* them; since, while *the blind leads the blind*, both fall into the ditch. If there had been a law given that could have given life, says the apostle, verily *righteousness* should have been by the law, Gal. iii. 21. But as there is no law given, that can give life to a sinner, it is a *vain, foolish* thing, to *press* such a soul, to get a *righteousness* by his own *performances*, which was never appointed of God, nor can be attained by man. No; the scripture hath concluded all under *sin*, that the promise (of life) by *faith* of Jesus Christ (as a sinner's righteousness) might be given to them that believe, verse 22. And those who receive it not in this *way*, shall never attain it in

any other, but must go *without* it for ever. *The labour of the foolish*, says the wise man, *wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city*, Eccles. x. 15. A man may labour all his days, to make himself *righteous* before God, by his own performances, and to make his *peace* with him, by his *legal* repentance, and humiliation for *sin*; and yet *lose* all his labour at *last*, and so weary himself in *vain*, being never able to reach that *city*, that eternal rest, which God has prepared for his people: because he *knoweth* not *Christ*, the only way, that leads thither; and so *walks* not by faith, in him, as such.

All men by nature, are ignorant of *Christ's righteousness*, as it is God's way of justifying and saving a sinner; and it is dangerous for souls to sit under such a ministry, that presseth *doing*, and persuades them their *safety* lies there, instead of *believing*: for, *how shall they believe*, saith the apostle, *in him of whom they have not heard?* and *how shall they hear without a preacher?* And *how shall they preach, except they be sent?* Rom. x. 14, 15. How shall poor souls believe in Christ for

SECT. VII. *The CONCLUSION.* 175

justification, when they have never *heard* of his *righteousness*, which is the proper *object* of faith? And how shall they *hear*, without a *preacher* of that gospel which declares it? And how shall they *preach* the gospel to others, who have never *seen* that salvation it reveals for sinners, by the *righteousness* of Christ themselves? How shall they declare the glory and efficacy thereof to *others*, who have never seen, nor experienced it *themselves*? And how does it appear, that they are *sent* by Christ, to preach the gospel, who neither *know*, nor *proclaim* his *righteousness*, for the *justification* of a sinner, which is such a main *doctrine* thereof?

Have we not reason to fear, that many of those who are called *ministers* of the gospel, are rather *preachers* of *Moses*, than of *Christ*? and that their *ministry* rather tends to lead souls to the bondage and death of the *law*, than to the liberty and life of the *gospel*? But, *how beautiful* are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things! That publish that peace with God, which was made for sinners alone, by the blood of Christ's cross; and is possessed, only by

176 *The Conclusion.* Sect. VII.

faith in him! That proclaim the glad tidings of those good things, which God has prepared to be enjoyed by *sinners*, through the justifying *righteousness* of his Son! And how great is the privilege of those souls, who sit under a *gospel*-ministry; since this is the *means* appointed of God, to work *faith* in them, and to bring *salvation* to them! Once more,

5. Since the *justification* of a sinner is by the *righteousness* of Christ, *imputed* to him, and received by *faith* alone; we may hence learn, how great the *obligation* of the *justified* ones is, to *live* to the *glory* of that *grace*, which has so freely and fully *justified* them, in and through Christ, unto eternal *life* by him! When the apostle had asserted the justification and salvation of God's people, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to be wholly of his free *mercy*, in and through Christ, Rom. xi. 32. and admired the riches of his *wisdom*; which was so brightly displayed in the dispensations of his *mercy* towards them, verse 33. he thus concludes his discourse, verse 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever, Amen.* It is as if he should say, since all

things, relating to the justification and salvation of God's people, are *of him*, and *through him*, it is meet that the glory of all should, by them, be given *to him*: and therefore, when he applies this doctrine of God's free mercy in Christ, to them who had obtained it, he thus addresseth them, chap. xii. 1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.* I beseech you, says he; *You that have obtained mercy; therefore, or, since it is God's design, to glorify his mercy, in the salvation of sinners, that you give him the glory of it: by the mercies of God; those mercies of God, which you are partakers of, in the forgiveness of all your sins, and in the justification of your persons; that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, that ye continually offer up yourselves, as a whole burnt-offering, in the flames of love, unto him that hath loved you, in all holy and acceptable obedience, to the glory of that God, who has thus had mercy upon you; which is your reasonable service, for it is a most reasonable thing, or a thing*

178 *The* CONCLUSION. Sect. VII.

for which there is the highest *reason*, that you should ever *serve* the Lord, to the *glory* of that *grace*, by which you are freely *justified*, and shall be eternally *glorified*. And thus the apostle Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 9. *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, [who are washed from all your sins in Christ's blood, and clothed with his righteousness] an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness, into his marvelous light.* And, you know, says the apostle Paul, *how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you, [i. e. of you justified, saved ones] that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory,* 1 Theff. ii.

11, 12.

And in short, as it was God's design to get himself *glory*, in the *justification* of sinners, by the *righteousness* of Jesus Christ; so the *display* thereof, throughout the whole gospel, lays *them* under the highest *obligation* to live to his *praise*. Does God the *Father* impute the *obedience* of his Son to poor sinners? Did God the *Son* obey, in *life* and in *death* for them? And does God the *Spirit*, reveal and apply this righ-

Sect. VII. *The* CONCLUSION. 179

teousness to them, and enable them to receive the same, as a *free gift* of grace, unto their eternal *life* in glory? What thanks, what praise, is due to God, in each of his glorious persons, for this abundant grace! And let the language of the justified ones, in heart, lip, and life, in all kinds of holy *obedience*, both now, and always be, *Thanks be unto God, for the grace of JUSTIFICATION! for this, his unspeakable GIFT!* 2 Cor. ix. 15. *Amen! Hallelujah!*

T H E E N D.

E R R A T A.

Preface, p. viii. l. 9, 10. for *imminent*, read *immanent*.
p. x. l. 5. from the foot, for *addition*, read *edition*.





A P P E N D I X . *

AS no revealed truth is of greater importance to the sons of men, than the justification of a guilty sinner, through the imputed righteousness of Christ; so, there can be no inquiry more interesting than for a person to know, if they be divorced from the law, as a covenant; married to Christ, as their best husband; and clothed with the robe of his justifying righteousness, as their adorning garment. To attain some satisfaction on this important point, the conscience may be posed with the following questions, as an additional improvement of the foregoing subject.

1. Did you ever come to *yourselves*? Luke xv. 17.; that is, did you ever feel yourselves to be bound with the cords of guilt, laden with iniquity, and ready to sink into the bottomless pit? Men must be condemned, before they are justified; be cast down, before they are lifted up; apply the curse to themselves, before they take hold of the blessing; hear the sentence of death denounced against them by the law, before they partake of the justification of life by the gospel.—If you were never burdened, you cannot be eased; if you were never broken, you cannot be bound up; if you were never mourners, you cannot be comforted; if you never tasted the bitterness of sin, you cannot taste of the sweetness of the grace of Christ, and experience his pu-

* This Appendix was not in the first impression of this Book.

rifying blood, and his reviving righteousness.—If you are justified, how did you come by pardon and peace? Was it by wrestling and prayer?

2. Are you *sanctified*? Justification and sanctification always go together. Where ever the blood of Christ is applied to justify, his Spirit is implanted to sanctify: they are always joined together, John xix. 34. Blood and water came out of his side; blood to justify, and water to sanctify. Jesus, at the same time that he satisfied for sin, crucified our *old man*, Rom. iv. 6. Those who are justified, by the sprinkling of his blood, are also redeemed from all iniquity, and consecrated to God. Where Christ washes with his blood, he likewise appoints with his Spirit.

3. Are we *adopted*? Justification is always attended with adoption. These who receive the *white stone* of justification, from all their sins, have also in it the *new name*, Rev. ii. 17. What is this new name, but the name of a child of God? Adoption is an amplification of our justification. We are not only pronounced righteous, and owned as friends; but reputed and accepted as sons and daughters; are nearly related, and greatly endeared to God.

4. Do you *love* God and Christ? It is recorded concerning Mary, *That she loved much, because much was forgiven her*, Luke vii. 47. When great debts are remitted, heinous sins pardoned, deep spots and stains fetched out, this calls for the highest and most fervent love. It is said, Prov. xvii. 9. *He that covereth transgression, seeketh love*. Surely then, with the greatest propriety it may be said, that God and Christ have sought our love, by *covering our sins*, Psalm xxxii. 1, 2. If you give not your hearts to God, if you do not set your love on Christ, who redeems from all iniquity, it is a plain sign that you have not tasted of the grace of God, or experienced the kindness of Christ in forgiving your sins.

5. What free *access* have you to God, and what joy and delight have you in him? Are your consciences so perfectly purged from iniquity, that you dare draw nigh God with confidence and boldness? *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*, Heb. vii. 19. and x. 19. Do you rejoice in God, through Christ Jesus our Lord, as having now received the atonement? Rom. v. 11. Are you so justified in the Lord as to glory? Isa. xlv. 25. *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.* Is your justification matter of the greatest joy to you? *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness*, Isaiah lxi. 10.

6. Are you employed, and do you take great pleasure and delight to *bless* and *praise* the Lord, for pardoning all your sins, and reconciling you to himself? This was David's delightful employment; *Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me bless his holy name,—who forgiveth all mine iniquities*, Psalm ciii. 1, 2, 3. Justified souls will sing praises to God who heals their backslidings; and rejoice in Christ Jesus, who is their righteousness and ransom: The redeemed of the Lord shall return to Zion with songs, Isa. xxxv. 10. Our lips were once sealed up with guilt; but now the mouths of accusers are stopped, by Christ's satisfaction: and shall not our lips then be opened, and our tongues loosed, to sing aloud of God's grace, and of Christ's righteousness?

7. Are you willing to go out of this world; to die, and to be with God, and Jesus Christ? Those that are justified have *peace with God*, and *rejoice in the hope of the glory of God*, Rom. v. 1, 2. Though condemned sinners shall be cast away on the shores of a miserable eternity; yet justified souls shall be landed safe in the harbour of glory, and enjoy a blessed eternity. When others pass into the prison

of hell, justified persons enter into the palace of God, Matth. xxv. 34, 41. When the tares are reaped for the furnace, believers are reaped for, and gathered into the garner, Matth. iii. 12.—Will justified persons shun the glorious presence of God, and slavishly dread his tribunal? Will pardoned and adopted persons be afraid to go home to their Father, and be put in possession of the heavenly inheritance? Are you therefore willing to be *absent from the body*, and to be *present with the Lord*, 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. Can you therefore conquer the fears of death? are you willing to leave your place on earth, to enjoy the place prepared for you in heaven? to put off the rags of mortality, that you may be clothed with the robes of glory? to quit your *earthly tabernacle*, for the *house not made with hands eternal in the heavens*? 2 Cor. v. 1.

If these, and the like, are your attainments, and the happy dispositions of your soul, they may be viewed as so many infallible evidences, that you have passed from death to life, are in a justified state, interested in the Redeemer's righteousness, have it imputed unto you, and shall, in due time, be honoured to *see God's face in righteousness*, Psalm xvii. 15.

As these are the only *happy* persons who have the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and are *made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21.; so they are of all others the most *miserable* who have no interest therein.—Why, they are in their *natural* state, and the scripture describes all such not only to be *stout-hearted and far from righteousness*, Isa. xlvii. 12; but to be *filled with all unrighteousness*, Rom. i. 29.—These who are not justified have all their *sins recorded* in God's book, Isa. lxv. 6. Man's iniquity is said to be written, so as to be marked before God, Jer. ii. 22.; and there is a counterpart of this record kept in the sinner's own conscience, Jer.

xvii. 1.—Till Christ becomes their righteousness, their souls are *shamefully naked*, Rev. iii. 17. As men are poor, they are void of an inherent righteousness; and, as they *are naked*, they are destitute of an imputed righteousness. Till the righteousness of Christ is spread over the soul, the glorious image of God is not put on it.—Till they are justified, there is a *breach* between God and them. Sin hath made a breach; and this breach stands open, and we need a Mediator to stand in the gap, Psalm cvi. 23. But there is none fit for this, but Jesus Christ, the living advocate, 1 John ii. 1.—There is a dreadful *storm of wrath*, in the cloud of the threatenings, which hangs over the heads of guilty sinners, Psalm xi. 6. This cup of indignation shall come to their lips; this storm shall fall on their souls. If God rains, the storm must needs be terrible: *I will rain*, says Jehovah, Gen. vii. 4. Though, by reason of unbelief, *God's judgments are now far above, out of the sight of sinners*, Psalm x. 5.; yet *their eyes shall see their destruction*, and they shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty, Job xxi. 20. The long and large roll of the curse will in due time fly to them, Ezek. lii. 2, 3, 4.—All the sins of unjustified persons are so many *evidences* and *witnesses* against them: these evidences are preserved and kept safe; their sins are hid that they may not be lost, Hos. xiii. 12. *The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, his sin is hid*. Their iniquity is bound up, that in due time it may be bound on them; their sin is so hid, that it shall be found, brought forth, and charged on them. So many sins as men have committed, and are unpardoned, so many witnesses have they provided against the day of their trial, Jer. xiv. 7. *O Lord, our iniquities testify against us*. Isa. lix. 12.—Every sin deserves, and every unjustified soul will be rewarded with *eternal death*, Rom. vi. 23. Death is *ὁ μισθός*, the wages of sin. The word signifies

soldiers wages, Luke iii. 14. They who cleave to Satan as their general, who abide in his tents, fight on his side against God, shall have eternal death as wages paid them, Isaiah lix. 18. and liv. 15. And as there is a judgment to come, God, who seeth the provocations of all men, will be a *swift witness against them*, Matth iii 5. And if their sins are not pardoned, but remain before God's face, and they inherit the iniquities of their whole life, they will be heirs of shame, misery, and eternal torments, Psalm xc. 8. Job xiii. 26. *The wicked shall be turned into hell.*

Though this be the unhappy situation of all unjustified persons, who have no interest in the Redeemer's righteousness; yet, such is the goodness of God to poor sinners, that he *brings near this righteousness* to them, Isaiah xlv. 13.; he reveals it fully to them in the gospel, for it is the *ministration of righteousness*, 2 Cor. v. 18.; and Christ himself declares, that he is the *end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4.; and that *his righteousness is unto and upon all that believe*, Rom. iii. 22.—And all the redeemed shall glory in it, saying, *Surely, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. In him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory*, Isaiah xlv. 24, 25. *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness*, Isaiah lxi. 10.

F I N I S.

T H E C O N T E N T S.

<i>An Advertisement,</i>	Page 3
<i>The Preface,</i>	5
<i>The Introduction,</i>	11
Sect. I. <i>Of the Matter of justification,</i>	12
<i>The nature of Christ's righteousness opened,</i>	13
<i>Consists in his active and passive obedience,</i>	14, 20
Sect. II. <i>Of the Manner of justification,</i>	41
<i>As it respects God, it is by imputation,</i>	ib.
<i>As it respects ourselves, it is by faith,</i>	46
<i>What justifying faith is, and is not,</i>	ib.
<i>How this faith acts towards its objects,</i>	48
<i>How it acts towards Christ,</i>	52
<i>It acts upon his blood,</i>	64
<i>It acts on his righteousness,</i>	66
<i>How justifying faith acts towards God,</i>	85
<i>How the justification of a sinner is by faith,</i>	87
Sect. III. <i>Of the Time of justification,</i>	96
<i>This viewed as immanent,</i>	ib.
<i>Considered as transient,</i>	97
<i>As passing on the whole elect,</i>	ib.
<i>As passing upon every individual,</i>	99
Sect. IV. <i>Of the Effect of justification,</i>	101
<i>As it respects the soul's peace,</i>	ib.
<i>As it respects its state,</i>	101
<i>As it respects its obedience,</i>	115
Sect. V. <i>An Objection, urged against the scheme of doctrine fully answered,</i>	130
Sect. VI. <i>Legal Obedience insufficient to justify a sinner,</i>	141
Sect. VII. <i>The Conclusion,</i>	162
<i>The Appendix,</i>	180

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